

**PRESERVATION OF LILONG NEIGHBORHOODS IN SHANGHAI:  
SOCIAL CHANGE AND SPATIAL RIGHTS**

A Thesis

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by

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## ABSTRACT

As once the most common form of dwelling in Shanghai, the Lilong has played a vital role in Shanghai's local culture. Gradually declining in number during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is now faced with a challenging and undecided future. This thesis aims to further the discussion of the preservation of Lilong neighborhoods in its fundamental relation with people and basic social context. Four case studies, Tian Zi Fang, Jian Ye Li, Jing An Bie Shu and Bu Gao Li, are used to add some realistic, specific details and to deepen the reflection on this topic. Each of the cases has its special architectural features, residential composition, history, and current problems all of which provide some insight into the uniqueness and individuality of every Lilong neighborhood. In the end recommendations are made to address to Lilong residents' right and to call for an equal way of Lilong preservation as a means to a better living environment for everyone and a more equitable society.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ran Yan was born on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1988 in Beijing, China, where she grew up and finished her early education. In 2011 she received her Bachelor of Engineering degree in Historic Preservation from Tongji University, in Shanghai. With a background in both architecture and historic preservation, she continued on to graduate study in the Historic Preservation Planning program at the City and Regional Planning Department of Cornell University. With the preparation of this thesis, she tries to incorporate the societal and anthropological aspects of historic preservation. It is expected that her degree will be conferred by the Graduate School in August 2013.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Lilong (里弄) is a type of residential housing that can be found in several cities and provinces of China. It is especially common in Shanghai. Most popular in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, it has now been faced with a dramatic change of fate. This thesis tries to examine the preservation issues of Shanghai's Lilong neighborhoods in their social context. As historic preservation incorporates a variety of subjects, many of the most essential preservation problems of Lilong cannot be solved without successfully balancing subjects such as the architecture, planning, governance, and economics. In order to improve the current situation, we need to acknowledge the interdisciplinary nature and to find out the sources of the specific problems of Lilong preservation. Some approaches to tackling these problems will be suggested near the end of this thesis.

### 1. Why Preserve Lilong?

Why should the Lilong be saved in Shanghai or other places? Should Lilong be regarded differently from other types of housing in Shanghai? The fact is that people associate this type of housing, especially the earlier types of Lilong,

with overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, and a certain level of poverty. Despite some nostalgic feelings among a small group of advocates and architectural scholars, the local governments of municipal, district and neighborhood levels in Shanghai hold the idea that large areas of common Lilong housing are inefficient compared to high-rise dwellings and they are an obstacle on the road toward a fully modernized metropolis.

At the same time, redevelopment pressure is reaching an extremely high level in the inner city of Shanghai, where most Lilong housing is located. This puts most Lilong in even greater danger. The situation requires immediate attention, thoughtful reflection and a series of positive solutions. The sooner a wider agreement is reached that this housing should be saved, the better chance to preserve the Lilong.

As Cao put it in “Kai Bu Hou De Shanghai Zhu Zhai” (and translated into English here):

Buildings are materialized society, especially dwellings. They are the comprehensive product of a society's political, economic, cultural and technical conditions of a certain period . . . Thus they can more

comprehensively reflect a society's true colors during the time than large public buildings<sup>1</sup>.

This statement contains a number of the fundamental characteristics of historic dwellings. To recklessly demolish a large amount of housing like the Lilong is to wipe away the materialized memory of our society. This is not to say that all of the dwellings should be preserved, but rather they should be dealt with cautiously and carefully, for each decision regarding a Lilong neighborhood or other historic housing is a demonstration of how we want our history to be told. It also indicates what we want in our built environment, today and in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Wei Cao, *The Shanghai Housing After Its Opening to Foreigners* (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 2004), 8.



Figure 1: Shi Ku Men Lilong on A Stamp Representing Shanghai Dwellings. (Source: [http://zhongyangguangchangld010.soufun.com/bbs/1010657635~1~10771/149964235\\_149966018.htm](http://zhongyangguangchangld010.soufun.com/bbs/1010657635~1~10771/149964235_149966018.htm))

For Shanghai, Lilong housing has played a significant part in its urban history, and vividly exhibits the city's social transformation during one of its most important historic periods. This housing type sheltered a large number of the lower to mid-level working class until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Shanghai has been very proud of this specific period of its history, as the city was opened to the world as a treaty port and enjoyed a leading role both economically and culturally in China. Today, the city embraces this memory through preserving the luxurious garden houses and public buildings that were occupied by the

upper class, while the memories of the majority working class who contributed to the city's development during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and the early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries are seldom mentioned. Both the working class and the Lilong where they lived deserve wider attention as the mirror of Shanghai's historical prosperity. To lose the Lilong is to lose the proof of an irreplaceable portion of Shanghai's distinctiveness. Therefore there is every reason to preserve them properly.

## 2. For Whom to Preserve and Who Should Preserve?

Buildings are preserved because people care about them. Buildings are preserved for people to understand the past and themselves, to strengthen and reshape their identities, and to offer later generations a fair chance to do the same.

Who cares about the Lilong? First and foremost are the people who live or used to live in these housing units, who remember important episodes in their lives associated with these places. Lilongs are or once were their homes, which reflect their experiences and emotions, positive and negative. People and places cannot be separated because they shape each other, and the more interactions between them, the more related they become. Thus the

residents of Lilongs are part of the places in which this housing was built. The residents should have an important say over the preservation or transformation of their homes.

Second, the Lilong should be preserved for all the other people who care about them, regardless of their identity, and social status. They can be common citizens in Shanghai, students, officers, tourists, expats, or even people who have never been to Shanghai, as long as they share a willingness to see better preserved Lilong housing, and a better living environment in it. They should not possess the power to override the needs of the residents however, because they are less closely related.

It is ideal that the residents themselves become the core driver of Lilong preservation, because only they can truly understand their own needs. All the other parties taking part in the preservation should act as assistants, for a forced preservation would only result in biased benefits, and could harm the neighborhood.

### 3. What to Preserve?

Since Lilong housing can embody people and their memories, it is the memories that should be preserved. Or rather the people's right to treasure their memories should be preserved. Most importantly, memories are not dead, but often are living experiences that are constantly being reshaped, whether they belong to an individual or a group. There is no clear line between the life one is living and that person's memory, between the society today and its inherited history.

Through preserving the places that are meaningful to people and enhancing people's living environment, the right to cherish the past and the life today is realized. Buildings are only a part of those meaningful places. A place is comprised of both the tangible and the intangible. Ned Kaufman uses the word "story-scape"<sup>2</sup> to stress the two-sided composition of place. As to Lilong, its story-scape can be comprised of every aspect of common Shanghai people's lives.

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<sup>2</sup> Ned Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 3.

In other words, what should be preserved is this deep-rooted connection between people and the place, for example, that between the residents and the Lilong they live in. Of course, people have the right to move in and out as they want, but it has to be self-determined and not imposed upon them against their will. The balanced flow of people can keep a place and its human connections alive. Similarly, a destroyed place means destroyed social relations. Places like the Lilong are to be preserved as a container of social lives and memories, not merely as buildings. What really matters is the place abundant with story-scapes, not just the physical structures.

#### 4. Methodology

The preliminary information for this thesis was collected during site visits in the summer of 2012, which involved photographing building sites and random interviews of residents. The interviews were carried out in speaking Mandarin Chinese. By incorporating oral history in the early phase of the research, the author was able to communicate with the interviewees directly, and gained some primary understanding of the sites. This facilitated the selection of the case studies.



The four cases were chosen based on a few standards, which are: (1) whether or not there had been a preservation project of a certain kind targeted at the neighborhood; (2) whether the project and the neighborhood have distinguished characteristics that differ from the other cases chosen; (3) whether all of the cases combined offer an insight into the status quo from various perspectives; (4) whether the cases are indicative of a trend in the future of Lilong preservation in Shanghai; and (5) whether or not there exist enough materials to carry out the research, and at the same time offer room to explore some important but undervalued aspects.

The literature research began in the early summer of 2012 and continued until May 2013. The English and Chinese literature referenced is roughly equal, but some differences exist in the range of subjects of the references in these two languages. In most cases, the material discussing Lilong history and the case studies are in Chinese, while the references on broader urban and preservation issues are in English. Historic maps in Chinese and foreign languages were also referenced to form an understanding of the development of the sites as well as the city of Shanghai.

Many of the earliest Lilong studies in Chinese were done by architects or scholars in architecture and architectural history, with a noticeable focus on the architectural interpretation. In recent years more attentions have been paid to the stories happened inside Lilongs. However, it is till now very difficult to find any research on the actual social and political process of Lilong preservation projects in Shanghai, or on the attitudes, efforts and influences of different stakeholders during each stage. As a result, the author referred to some news reports, both on the Lilong in general and on the specific cases, so that a more realistic view on the projects and on the public opinion can be formed. By incorporating different sources of information, this study offers a fresh look on the issue of Lilong preservation.

## 5. Structure

Chapter One will introduce the early formation, development, and architectural features of the Lilong housing, demonstrating its European and traditional Chinese origins. This will be followed by an investigation into the cultural and social components of this housing form, which represent an essential part of its significance to Shanghai. Chapter One will also offer readers the

background of Lilong's decline in recent decades and provide a picture of the recent preservation efforts in Shanghai.

The next four chapters will each be devoted to a case study of Lilong preservation. The four cases are: Tian Zi Fang, Jian Ye Li, Jing An Bie Shu and Bu Gao Li. They are all located in or near the center of the city, and three of them are in the former French Concession (Figure 2). Each chapter introduces the formation, history, important architectural features, and more importantly, the process of the recent preservation project and its effect on the site. Different stake holders' attitudes are described in each case, with an outlook to the future transformation or potential development direction for it.

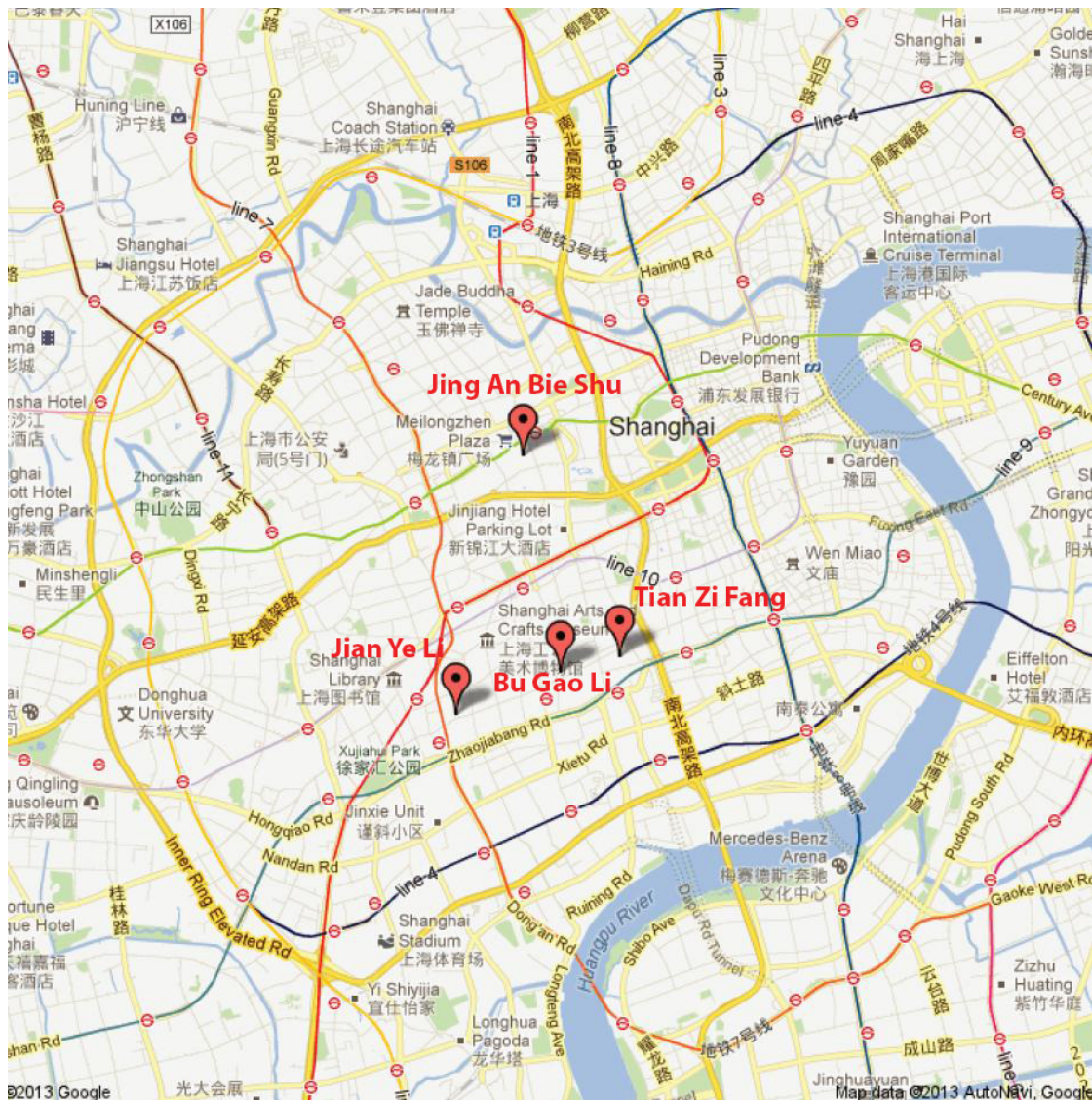


Figure 2: Locations of the Cases. (Source: GoogleMap)

Chapter Six will be a comparative analysis to wrap up the four case studies.

The discussion is arranged under three sub-topics. In the topic of Architectural Properties and Building Condition, the sites' differences in physical nature will be compared with an analysis of the effects they had on the preservation projects. The Designation System and Government Policy

topic will use the cases as examples to stress the governmental influences, and the advantages and disadvantages of the current heritage preservation legal system in Shanghai. And in the last topic of Power and Value in Preservation, the imbalance of the imbedded social power in these preservation projects will be touched on, especially the conflicts between the residents and the government.

In the Conclusion some recommendations for Lilong preservation will be put forward, respecting the individuality of each Lilong, incorporating the residents' interests with different levels of the governments' efforts, setting up clearly defined rules and prioritizing regulations. The Conclusion will also raise questions to be further investigated. In the end this discussion will return to an emphasis on the importance of achieving equitable outcomes through preserving the connections between people and Lilong neighborhoods.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION TO LILONG NEIGHBORHOODS

### 1.0. Introduction

This chapter begins with an examination of the history and physical development of the Lilong and continues with a discussion of its social characteristics. The third section describes how the recent social transformations in the country and in Shanghai are making a difference, as land reform is being carried out and the real estate market boomed. The last section briefly introduces a short history of the city's Lilong preservation and its recent development, with the case of Xin Tian Di, to offer a background in preparation for the four case studies in later chapters.

### 1.1. Lilong as a Building Type

Although Lilong housing existed in several other Chinese cities, like Tianjin and Wuhan, two other historic treaty ports, this housing type was most dominant in Shanghai, and it has evolved to represent the local culture.



city, creating housing pressure and business opportunities in real estate<sup>4</sup>. Foreign companies in those concessions seized the initiative to build a large number of low-cost boarding houses to rent out. Though poorly constructed, these houses were arranged in a fashion similar to the European row houses and were recognized as the model for the Lilong. After the Taiping Rebellion, the construction of European boarding houses decreased and was eventually prohibited inside the concessions because of fire safety concerns<sup>5</sup>.

The typical Shi Ku Men (石库门) Lilong was first erected around 1870, when the size of the population in Shanghai kept increasing along with the capitalistic economic growth. The very first housing units were scattered on the newly constructed streets inside the British Concession and in a part of the French Concession, which was between the British Concession and the Chinese town<sup>6</sup>. During this period, Shi Ku Men Lilongs, also known today as the Old Type Shi Ku Men Lilong, were mostly supported by wood posts, with

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<sup>4</sup> Qizheng Guo, *The Social Production of the Alleyway Houses of Shanghai, 1843-1943* (Taipei: National Taiwan University, 2003), 27-28.

<sup>5</sup> Wenbing Fan, *The Conservation and Renewal of LiLong Housing in Shanghai* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2004), 18.

<sup>6</sup> Tuo Lin, Toshio Mizuuchi, *Xian Dai Cheng Shi Geng Xin Yu She Hui Bian Qian: Zhu Zhai. Shang Tai. Zhi Li* (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Publishers, 2007), 104-105.



brick walls attached to the timber structure. Structurally they were very similar to traditional Chinese architecture<sup>7</sup>.



Figure 4: Example of Shi Ku Men. (Photo taken by author on Nov.28, 2008)

For each housing unit, there is an entrance on the front boundary wall marked by a grand door, called “Shi Ku Men” (石库门) (Figure 4). These were usually dark painted wooden door leaves with stone-looking plaster frames decorated

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<sup>7</sup> Shaozhou Wang, Zhimin Chen, *Li Long Jian Zhu* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 1987), 89.

in western style at the lintels. Probably because the doors are the most ornate and outstanding feature compared to the other parts of the building, people name this type of housing as Shi Ku Men Lilong.

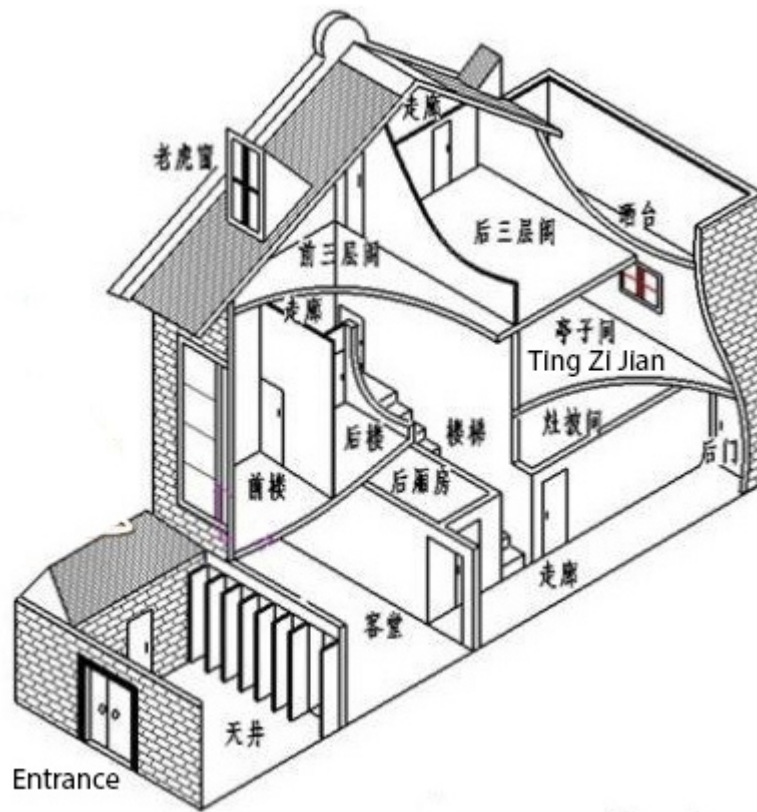


Figure 5: Standard Lilong Unit. (Source: [http://www.doyouhike.net/forum/discover\\_shanghai/561813,0,0,1.html](http://www.doyouhike.net/forum/discover_shanghai/561813,0,0,1.html))

The spatial layout within each single housing unit is mainly derived from traditional vernacular dwellings, but both the courtyard and the rooms enclosing it are smaller in size. A staircase is also added behind the center room (Figure 5). The units were arranged in a way that assimilates the idea of

Western row houses, although they were lower in height and much more tightly squeezed within a neighborhood<sup>8</sup>. The housing rows were often extremely crowded together, separated by lanes less than four meters wide<sup>9</sup>. Fire safety was still a major concern in such neighborhoods.

The New Type Shi Ku Men Lilong came into being around the 1920's, characterized by its more advanced brick load-bearing structure along with wooden trusses under the roof, and cement used for the terrace<sup>10</sup>. Generally speaking the site plans of the New Type Shi Ku Men Lilong paid more attention to orientation and placed rows in straight lines, with a clearer differentiation between the main lane and sub-lanes. The width of the main lane reached 5 meters on average<sup>11</sup>. Some New Type Shi Ku Men Lilong had three stories instead of two as seen in Old Type Shi Ku Men Lilong. The interior of the new type saw more improvements. Many of the new units were

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<sup>8</sup> Paul Reuber, "Shanghai's ShiKuMen and Lilongs," *Canadian Architect*, Vol. 43, No. 2, (February 1998): 30.

<sup>9</sup> Shaozhou Wang, Zhimin Chen, *Li Long Jian Zhu* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 1987), 54.

<sup>10</sup> Hua Shen, *Shanghai Li Long Min Ju* (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 1993), 34-35.

<sup>11</sup> Shaozhou Wang, Zhimin Chen, *Li Long Jian Zhu* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 1987), 58.

equipped with a bathroom, a kitchen, and some even had a garage. Other improved details included better-designed stairs and more elegant flooring.

Several other types of Lilong did not have large decorated doorways. One of them was Guang Shi Lilong (广式里弄), or Cantonese Lilong. Many of them were built approximately between 1910 and 1919, and were occupied by Cantonese and Japanese people. This type got its name because of its resemblance to the old houses in Guangdong.<sup>12</sup> By 1920, Lilong housing had spread to most parts of the Public Concession (enlarged based on the former British Concession) and French Concession, including a large portion of the industrial zone to the north of Suzhou River. A number of examples were also constructed in the old Chinese town. Both foreign and Chinese real estate developers and agents had thrown themselves into the development of Lilong housing.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Shaozhou Wang, Zhimin Chen, *Li Long Jian Zhu* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 1987), 35.

<sup>13</sup> Tuo Lin, Toshio Mizuuchi, *Xian Dai Cheng Shi Geng Xin Yu She Hui Bian Qian: Zhu Zhai. Shang Tai. Zhi Li* (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Publishers, 2007), 106-109.

Also around 1920, the New Type Lilong was formed. Note that the New Type Lilong is different from the New Type Shi Ku Men Lilong in that it does not have Shi Ku Men at its entrances<sup>14</sup>. It became more popular in the decades between World War I and World War II. Compared to the earlier types, the New Type Lilong was much more comfortable to live in and suitable for modern life. Many of them were called “Bie Shu (别墅)”, meaning villa, although they were still designed in rows and were not located in the suburbs, but in the city.

In the plan of the unit, the front yard was retained, but the arrangement no longer adhered to the traditional dwelling style<sup>15</sup>. The boundary walls were lowered to allow openness, more daylight and fresh air. In addition, the functions of the rooms were more sophisticated, and the infrastructure more

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<sup>14</sup> Shaozhou Wang, Zhimin Chen, *Li Long Jian Zhu* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 1987), 62.

<sup>15</sup> Yan Zuo, Yan Qing An, *The Death and Life of Shanghai Alley Factories* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2012), 10-13.

complete. New building materials of the time, like steel<sup>16</sup> added permanence to the structure (Figure 6)<sup>17</sup>.



Figure 6: Jing An Bie Shu as an example of New Type Lilong. (Photo taken by author on Jul. 28, 2012)

Two other types of housing also called Lilong gained their popularity in the very late stage of Shanghai's modern history, before the founding of the People's Republic of China. They are Lilong Garden Housing and Lilong

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<sup>16</sup> Hua Shen, *Shanghai Li Long Min Ju* (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 1993), 65.

<sup>17</sup> Shaozhou Wang, Zhimin Chen, *Li Long Jian Zhu* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 1987), 93.

Apartment Housing. In architectural style they do not remind people of typical Lilong but rather garden houses and apartments. It becomes clear when looking at their site plans that they were set up in rows along straight lanes. Since dwellings arranged by lanes were called Lilong in Shanghai, they received the same name.

These two types of housing were much larger in size and equipped with more luxurious facilities. The majority of their customers were foreigners and the wealthy class. Since they are much more distant from the earlier types of Lilong from many perspectives and have not been faced with the same threats of demolition, the discussion of these recently-built Lilong will not be of major concern in this thesis.

The Lilong had generally developed from the center of the early concession area, towards the west and north<sup>18</sup>. In 1949 there was Lilong housing in almost every part of Shanghai except the north corner and the southwest

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<sup>18</sup> Hua Shen, *Shanghai Li Long Min Ju* (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 1993), 18.

edge<sup>19</sup>. After 1949 there were very few Lilong constructed and the renovation of them became the major concern in the last two decades.

## 1.2. Typical Life in Lilong and Local Memories Before 1949

Life in Lilong often brought an extremely strong sense of community. Thanks to the different developers, each Lilong was composed of rows of Lilong housing and was self-enclosed or bounded by walls. This way each neighborhood had a clearly defined boundary.

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<sup>19</sup> Tuo Lin, Toshio Mizuuchi, *Xian Dai Cheng Shi Geng Xin Yu She Hui Bian Qian: Zhu Zhai. Shang Tai. Zhi Li* (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Publishers, 2007), 112.



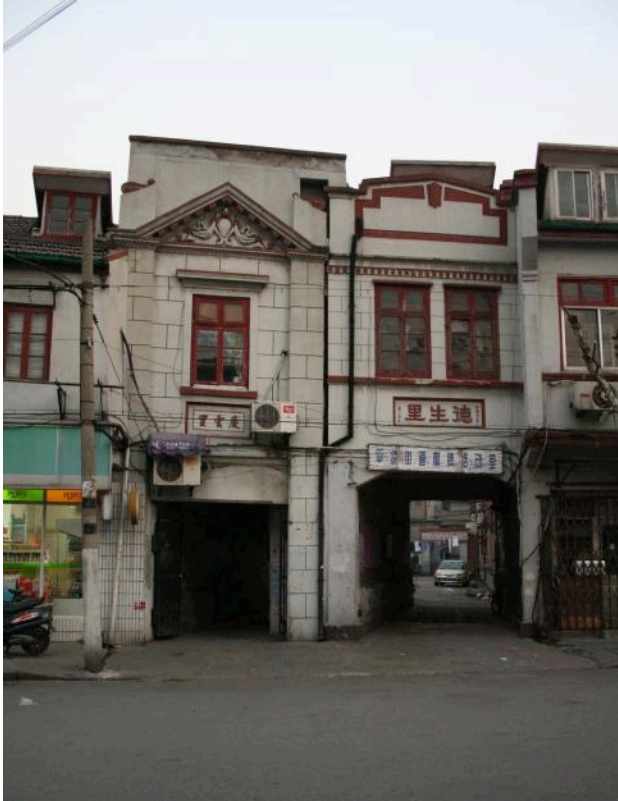


Figure 7: Example of Lilong Entrances. (Photo taken by author on Apr. 30, 2010)

Almost every Lilong had a uniquely designed main entrance with the Lilong's name and year of completion on it, linking its main lane to the street outside (Figure 7). Many of them were decorated with arches, triangular and segmental gables, patterns in Baroque and Classism styles, or elements from traditional Chinese style arches<sup>20</sup>. Entering a Lilong marked by its own name and into the lanes filled with acquaintances and domestic activities was like

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<sup>20</sup> Xiao Wei Luo, Yong Jie Sha etc., *Shanghai Xin Tian Di: Jiu Qu Gai Zao De Jian Zhu Li Shi Ren Wen Li Shi Yu Kai Fa Mo Shi De Yan Jiu* (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2002), 44, 45, 48.

stepping into another world. All of the above helped to create a sense of belonging, and the feeling of home.

However, this does not mean that life in Lilong was monotonous or merely domestic. The Lilongs along the street were mostly turned into storefronts to accommodate all sorts of shops. They included cigarette shops, clothing stores, tailor shops, clinics, lawyer's offices, and in many cases, small grocery stores. The upper levels of the stores were often the homes of the owners. A few shops would be located inside the Lilong neighborhood instead of along the street.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Xiao Wei Luo, Yong Jie Sha etc., *Shanghai Xin Tian Di: Jiu Qu Gai Zao De Jian Zhu Li Shi Ren Wen Li Shi Yu Kai Fa Mo Shi De Yan Jiu* (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2002), 33.



Figure 8: Today's Activities on A Lane in A Lilong Neighborhood. (Photo taken by author on Oct. 16, 2008)

More characteristic in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century were those “stores on the move”. Shoemakers, barbers and book-sellers would wandering around in a Lilong and conduct their business in the lanes. Their hawking told the residents what kind of business was going on outside and even which vendor it was. The Lilong was the birthplace of many brands which later became well-known chains. The chicken store “Xiao Shao Xing” is one example.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Xiao Wei Luo, Yong Jie Sha etc., *Shanghai Xin Tian Di: Jiu Qu Gai Zao De Jian Zhu Li Shi Ren Wen Li Shi Yu Kai Fa Mo Shi De Yan Jiu* (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2002), 55.



Figure 9: Example of A Factory in the Lilong. (Photos taken by author on Apr. 30, 2010)

There were also mid- to small-scale family-based factories located within Lilongs (Figure 9). Many of them were experts in the production of ajinomoto, textiles, or ink<sup>23</sup>. A few of these former workshops achieved great success and sold products across Southeast Asia<sup>24</sup>. Some Lilongs also had primary

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<sup>23</sup> Yan Zuo, Yan Qing An, *The Death and Life of Shanghai Alley Factories* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2012), 23-28.

<sup>24</sup> Xiao Wei Luo, Yong Jie Sha etc., *Shanghai Xin Tian Di: Jiu Qu Gai Zao De Jian Zhu Li Shi Ren Wen Li Shi Yu Kai Fa Mo Shi De Yan Jiu* (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2002), 55.

schools inside their neighborhoods<sup>25</sup>, which provided great convenience for the young parents and made their locations more desirable.

Because of the isolation and the relatively small dimensions in the layout, there were not many cars in Lilong except for a few high-end neighborhoods. The lanes were quite safe most of the time. Residents sat together chatting, play mahjong or chess, or were just relaxing. For children, the lanes were their playground, social venue and favorite recreational space<sup>26</sup>. Some residents still recall their childhood when they were spending so much time playing with other kids in the lanes that they would not go back home for dinner until their parents became impatient, or the smell awoke their hunger<sup>27</sup>.

The residents came from all over China and even abroad, adding a variety to the rich life in the Lilong. People who originated in Shanghai were not the majority in Lilongs. Instead, the people who migrated from the nearby Jiangsu

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<sup>25</sup> Yan Zuo, Yan Qing An, *The Death and Life of Shanghai Alley Factories* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2012), 20-21.

<sup>26</sup> Ping Xin, *Cong Shanghai Fa Xian Li Shi: Xian Dai Hua Jin Cheng Zhong De Shanghai Ren Ji Qi She Hui Sheng Huo, 1927-1937* (Shanghai: Shanghai University Press, 2009), 341.

<sup>27</sup> Weiqun Zhang, *Shanghai Long Tang Yuan Qi* (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 2009), 217.

and Zhejiang Provinces were more dominant<sup>28</sup>. A large number of them came to open a business or to seek better employment. The migrants from Beijing, Nanjing and other places escaped from political crisis and sought protection in the foreign concessions<sup>29</sup>.

Except for the Lilong Garden Housing, Lilong Apartment Housing, and a few New Type Lilongs, most Lilongs were occupied by mid- to lower level employees and workers. They composed about three-quarters of all the residents in Shanghai before the Liberation. In addition, behind the layers of Lilong housing, there were several large mansions (Figure 10). Often a single mansion existed within a neighborhood, occupied by a wealthy family. The lives in the mansions were less closely linked to people in the same Lilong than among the common residents.<sup>30</sup>

The social network in the Lilong was more profound and powerful than people usually imagine. Neighbors visited each other's home regularly, started clubs

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<sup>28</sup> Yan Zuo, Yan Qing An, *The Death and Life of Shanghai Alley Factories* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2012), 7.

<sup>29</sup> Lan Cheng Hu, *Jin Sheng Jin Shi, Vol.1* (Taipei: San San Shu Fang, 1990), 412.

<sup>30</sup> Xiao Wei Luo, Yong Jie Sha etc., *Shanghai Xin Tian Di: Jiu Qu Gai Zao De Jian Zhu Li Shi Ren Wen Li Shi Yu Kai Fa Mo Shi De Yan Jiu* (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2002), 42.



together and knew each other's family and friends. Oftentimes they borrowed money from neighbors in the markets or introduced job opportunities to them.<sup>31</sup>



Figure 10: Example of a Mansion House Built Inside Part of A Lilong. (Photo taken by author on Dec. 02, 2008)

Considering the enormous number of Lilong housing units in Shanghai, it is natural that a noticeable number of celebrities resided in them, as recorded in

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<sup>31</sup> Weiqun Zhang, *Shanghai Long Tang Yuan Qi* (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 2009), 222.

Chinese history. Because the foreign concessions were considered “safe” for some Chinese and the city was a center of international communication, Shanghai became the center of political movements in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Activists gathered here and the Lilong was the most common place for them to stay.

The most well-known Lilong building today is probably the birth place of the Chinese Communist Party, where its first meeting was held. In a larger context many other Lilongs were used to hold secret meetings by various parties, to direct revolt, to store ordnance, or to edit journals, and to accommodate political activists.<sup>32</sup>

Wealthier celebrities lived in the New Type Lilong and less affluent but influential people resided in Shi Ku Men Lilong. In either case, they came from all walks of life, including painters like Xu Beihong, writers like Ba Jin, educators like Zhu Kezhen, movie stars like Hu Die, jurists, scientists, and

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<sup>32</sup> Weiqun Zhang, *Shanghai Long Tang Yuan Qi* (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 2009), 2-13.



government officials.<sup>33</sup> The list could continue at length with the names of widely known celebrities.

Naturally many of the writers mentioned above not only produced their famous works in the Lilong, but also wrote about life there. In fact, there was such a large number of them that people gave a specific name to the literature closely related to Lilong: “Ting Zi Jian (亭子间) Literature”. “Ting Zi Jian” refers to the tiny gloomy room located above the kitchen in a Lilong unit (Figure 5), where many single writers resided.<sup>34</sup>

It would be hard for a writer to write about Shanghai without mentioning the Lilong. Among the most emotionally devoted writers is Zhang Henshui, in whose novels many main characters live, grow and experience the extreme aspects of their lives in Lilong neighborhoods. Eileen Chang also selected the Lilong as the backdrop in some of her stories.

In summary, the Lilong played a huge role in Shanghai's history. The stories and memories this housing type contains are countless. It to a great degree

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<sup>33</sup> Weiqun Zhang, *Shanghai Long Tang Yuan Qi* (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 2009), 17-24.

<sup>34</sup> Xiao Wei Luo, Yong Jie Sha etc., *Shanghai Xin Tian Di: Jiu Qu Gai Zao De Jian Zhu Li Shi Ren Wen Li Shi Yu Kai Fa Mo Shi De Yan Jiu* (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2002), 57.

shaped the city's distinctiveness, as well as what Shanghai has been for most people in its recent history, which is still influencing what it represents today.

### 1.3. Recent Social Transformation and Redevelopment Problems

When the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the country and the city changed direction. It is not an exaggeration to describe the economic development in the first 30 years of the new-born nation and of Shanghai as stagnant, if not falling back<sup>35</sup>. As the national strategy placed the development of mid- and west China in priority, the coastal area was presented very few opportunities to advance<sup>36</sup>. Shanghai was no longer the global city that it was, but a Chinese socialist city where capital flows were strictly controlled and restrained. It no longer enjoyed the obvious central status within the country.

With respect to housing, the Shanghai government, like many other municipal governments in China at that time, put very little money into the building of simple modern-style housing villages for workers near the periphery of the

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<sup>35</sup> Li, Ling Hin, *Urban Land Reform in China* (New York: St. Martin's Press Inc., 1999), 129.

<sup>36</sup> Tuo Lin, Toshio Mizuuchi, *Xian Dai Cheng Shi Geng Xin Yu She Hui Bian Qian: Zhu Zhai. Shang Tai. Zhi Li* (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Publishers, 2007), 120-121.

city<sup>37</sup> (Figure 11). Some of the Lilong housing was not on the government's radar during this period. Most of the buildings were not maintained. Some additions and small alterations were added gradually, but new construction was restricted and some of the oldest types of Lilong were facing serious deterioration.



Figure 11: Example of Workers' Village. (Photo taken by author on Apr. 22, 2008)

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<sup>37</sup> Wenbing Fan, *The Conservation and Renewal of LiLong Housing in Shanghai* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2004), 22.

As the ownership of both land and properties came into the government's hands, space and ownership in Lilong housing were re-allocated. Many more people lived in a unit than the single family for which it was originally designed. Big mansions in Lilong neighborhoods were often transformed into community centers or divided into apartments for multiple households. The increasing crowdedness in Lilong neighborhoods put more pressure on the physical structure as well as the facilities and accelerated the worsening of the housing conditions.<sup>38</sup> A great portion of residents in older type Lilongs even had to cook on the lanes since there was not enough room for kitchens inside of the buildings.

The circumstances took another turn in the 80's when China began to reform and open up to the world again. Urban land reform started alongside with other aspects of economic reform. With the adjustment of governmental policies, land use rights became transferable. The land market took off in Shanghai and the city became one of the hottest and most flexible locations in

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<sup>38</sup> Wenbing Fan, *The Conservation and Renewal of LiLong Housing in Shanghai* (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2004), 22-23.

China<sup>39</sup>. Unsurprisingly, development pressure in real estate in the inner city rose rapidly as Shanghai met its second miraculous economic development (Figure 12).



Figure 12: Urban Expansion of Shanghai. (Source: National Geography, <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2010/03/shanghai/shanghai-map>)

<sup>39</sup> Li, Ling Hin, *Urban Land Reform in China* (New York: St. Martin's Press INC., 1999), 135.



Figure 13: Crowdedness and Insanitation in the Lilong. (Photo taken by author on Nov. 11, 2008)

In contrast, the condition of the Lilong deteriorated even more. Crowdedness and lack of sanitation became the two most serious problems in most old Lilongs, where infrastructure was lacking (Figure 13). To solve the residents' problem as well as to relieve the housing pressure in the inner city, the Shanghai government began the project of transforming the urban slums,<sup>40</sup> including many historic Lilong areas. In the first years some extremely poor Lilong neighborhoods were torn down to build high-rise residential housing under the order and supervision of the government. It is worth noting that a large number of the original residents were moved back to the modernized and improved neighborhoods, because the housing prices had not risen to the

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<sup>40</sup> Tuo Lin, Toshio Mizuuchi, *Xian Dai Cheng Shi Geng Xin Yu She Hui Bian Qian: Zhu Zhai. Shang Tai. Zhi Li* (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Publishers, 2007), 26-27.

extent they have today, and most of the residents who returned understandably expressed a high level of satisfaction with the projects<sup>41</sup>.

In the early stage of the reform, the government had played an essential role as both the originator and conductor. In the more recent decades, the market itself increasingly exerts more power. Although real estate is still bringing in increasingly high revenue for the government, it is the developers, some of which are government-directed, who initiate and invest in most real estate development under the market rules, aiming not merely to improve housing conditions but also to make large profits<sup>42</sup>. As a result, the Lilong areas are effectively being replaced physically, economically and socially<sup>43</sup>. As a result, most Lilongs are demolished<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>41</sup> Zhigang Li, Fulong Wu, "Socio-spatial Differentiation and Residential Inequalities in Shanghai: A Case Study of Three Neighborhoods," *Housing Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 5, (September 2006): 705.

<sup>42</sup> Shenjing He, Fulong Wu, "Property-led Redevelopment in Post-reform China: A Case Study of Xintiandi Redevelopment project in Shanghai," *Journal of Urban Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 1, (2005): 4.

<sup>43</sup> Shenjing He, "State-sponsored Gentrification Under Market Transition: The Case of Shanghai," (*Urban Affairs Review*, Vol. 43, No. 2, (November 2007): 174.

<sup>44</sup> Wenbing Fan, *The Conservation and Renewal of LiLong Housing in Shanghai*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2004), 37.

The large-scale redevelopment of historic Lilong neighborhoods concentrated in a few specific areas. One of them is the former Nanshi District where the old Chinese town was located<sup>45</sup>. The Lilongs there were among the poorest in condition and mostly of old types. Even those later-built Lilongs in Nanshi District have more than the usual amount of old-type Lilongs, because of the strong influence of traditional Chinese architecture in the former Chinese town. This part of the city had always housed the less privileged, so that the Lilongs there had received much less maintenance and were more crowded. Another focus of redevelopment is center Huangpu District, the central district of Shanghai. This district has also been experiencing increased development pressures, and is seen as having real estate that could be more profitable.

The recent redevelopment of historic Lilong areas brought out the issue of relocation. As the housing prices rose to an extremely high level in the inner city, the real estate developers, in order to bring down the cost, have always been trying to lower the relocation fees they had to pay to the residents. As a

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<sup>45</sup> Tuo Lin, Toshio Mizuuchi, *Xian Dai Cheng Shi Geng Xin Yu She Hui Bian Qian: Zhu Zhai. Shang Tai. Zhi Li*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Publishers, 2007), 125.



result the compensation often fell far behind the market price<sup>46</sup>. Thus fewer original residents could afford moving back to the redeveloped neighborhoods. There's an increasingly intense conflict between the real estate developers and the original residents<sup>47</sup>.

Consequently many residents in Lilongs refused to move under the unfair terms unless they could get more satisfactory arrangements, although they very much wanted to move to better apartments. Probably due to the lack of enforcement of the regulations from the government, many developers went too far to achieve their goals. Illegal means like forced dismantling, or cutting off basic utilities have been used to make the residents accept the terms and move.<sup>48</sup>

The relocated residents are still faced with troubles and inconveniences of different kinds. They were mostly moved to the outer city where there is much

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<sup>46</sup> Liza Weinstein, Xuefei Ren, "The Changing Right to the City: Urban Renewal and Housing Rights in Globalizing Shanghai and Mumbai," *City & Community*, Vol. 8, No. 4, (2009): 414.

<sup>47</sup> Qin Shao, *Shanghai Gone: Domicide and Defiance in a Chinese Megacity*, (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2013), 16-17.

<sup>48</sup> Nailin Han, "Shanghai Residents Protest Forced Demolition for World Expo," *BBC Morning Asia Pacific*, 04 April (2007): 1.

less transportation and shopping access, and it was very hard for them to keep their former jobs<sup>49</sup>. Children lost the superior educational opportunities they had in the central city, where many better schools are located. Elderly people oftentimes found it hard to adjust to the strange new neighborhoods. All in all, the redevelopment has been helping to enlarge the gap between inner and outer city, and to transport the poor to areas that have less economic advantages, while the changes are attracting the well-off to the wealthier center of the city<sup>50</sup>.

#### 1.4. The Practice of Lilong Preservation in Shanghai

Compared to the real estate redevelopment of old neighborhoods in the inner city, the realization on the part of the government and the general public of the need to preserve Lilong neighborhoods came relatively late. Near the end of the 80s, the local government experimented with some new ways of renovation in a few Lilong neighborhoods, trying to incorporate economic, and

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<sup>49</sup> Siming Li, Yuling Song, "Redevelopment, Displacement, Housing Conditions, and Residential Satisfaction: A Study of Shanghai," *Environment and Planning A*, Vol. 41, (2009): 1096.

<sup>50</sup> Shenjing He, Fulong Wu, "Socio-spatial Impacts of Property-led Redevelopment on China's Urban Neighborhoods," *Cities*, Vol. 24, No. 3, (2007): 202.

cultural solutions, working in cooperation with some foreign experts. Among the completed projects were the Qian Jia Tang and Zhang Jia Zhai neighborhoods, which included some elements of preservation in combination with redevelopment and renewal.<sup>51</sup>

Also in the late 80s, Shanghai was designated by the state as a National Famous Historical and Cultural City<sup>52</sup>. The designation and preservation of all types of architectural or immovable heritages is carried on in two parallel systems in Shanghai. The first one is the national system of Historical and Cultural Sites (文物保护单位), which consists of lists of different levels of importance, ranging from the national level, through the provincial level, to the municipal and county or district level. The official designations in Shanghai resumed in 1977 after a break due to the Cultural Revolution and earlier designations were re-announced with some corrections<sup>53</sup>. By October 2012,

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<sup>51</sup> Wenbing Fan, *The Conservation and Renewal of LiLong Housing in Shanghai*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2004), 34.

<sup>52</sup> Xiao Wei Luo, Yong Jie Sha etc., *Shanghai Xin Tian Di: Jiu Qu Gai Zao De Jian Zhu Li Shi Ren Wen Li Shi Yu Kai Fa Mo Shi De Yan Jiu*, (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2002), 73.

<sup>53</sup> *China Cultural Heritage*, <http://www.cchmi.com/tabid/75/MoreModuleID/426/MoreTabID/69/Default.aspx>, last accessed on Mar. 27, 2013.

Shanghai had 16 national level designations, 165 municipal level and 292 county or district level designations of Historical and Cultural Sites<sup>54</sup>. The national law for the preservation of Historical and Cultural Sites offers principal guidelines but does not deal with detailed preservation requirements<sup>55</sup>.

The other system is called the “Excellent Historic Architecture and Historic Cultural Areas of Shanghai”. This system operates within the boundary of the municipality and was founded later than the national system. Starting in 1989, the government has announced four groups of Excellent Historic Architecture, totaling 632 properties<sup>56</sup>. In 2003 the government officially designated 12 Historic Cultural Areas in the central city and compiled preservation plans for them in 2004. In 2005, 32 more Historic Cultural Areas were designated in the suburban and Pudong districts.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> <http://www.shtong.gov.cn/node2/node4429/node70351/node70378/index.html>, last accessed on Mar. 27, 2013.

<sup>55</sup> Yuan Li, Bing Zhu, Xiaoxia Liu, *Xin Wen Wu Bao Hu Fa Ji Shi Shi Tiao Li Wen Da*, (Beijing: China Legal Publishing House, 2003), .

<sup>56</sup> [http://www.shgtj.gov.cn/xxbs/lssj/200602/t20060223\\_272580.htm](http://www.shgtj.gov.cn/xxbs/lssj/200602/t20060223_272580.htm), last accessed on Mar. 27, 2013.

<sup>57</sup> <http://sh.eastday.com/qtmt/2008olympic/u1a467296.html>, last accessed on Mar. 27, 2013.

The regulations for Excellent Historic Architecture and Historic Cultural Areas are more comprehensive and specific than the national law for the preservation of Historic and Cultural Sites. The designations of Excellent Historic Architecture are divided into four levels indicating different degrees of significance followed by different standards of preservation<sup>58</sup>. It should also be noted that the two systems are not completely unrelated. There are some overlapping parts in their designations and a site can be listed in both systems. Unfortunately, in these two preservation systems of architectural or immovable heritage, the majority of the designations were not Lilong and, before the late 1990s, little attention was paid to the preservation of Lilong housings outside of academia. Up until the first decade of 21<sup>st</sup> century, the most common repairs made to them were the repainting of exterior walls to make them “look better”. Besides demolition and redevelopment, very few projects considered the needs and wishes of the residents in the Lilong.

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<http://www.shanghai.gov.cn/shanghai/node2314/node3124/node3177/node3181/userobject6ai1126.html>, last accessed on Mar. 27, 2013.

The first time that the Lilong began to attract wider attention across Shanghai and China was when the Xin Tian Di project was undertaken. Xin Tian Di is the name of a square in a real estate development project completed in 2001 by Shui On Group (瑞安集团) from Hong Kong. It is consisted of a large piece of land called the Taipingqiao district in inner Shanghai. The whole project included a commercial district, an artificial lake and a residential community<sup>59</sup>. Before the project began, the land was occupied by a large number of Lilongs. Most of them were torn down to construct new buildings, except a few lanes whose exterior were kept as a part of shops on Xin Tian Di Square, and their interior spaces were largely altered to accommodate commercial functions. The original residents were all relocated while the area was transformed into a more expensive commercialized community.

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<sup>59</sup> Xiao Wei Luo, Yong Jie Sha etc., *Shanghai Xin Tian Di: Jiu Qu Gai Zao De Jian Zhu Li Shi Ren Wen Li Shi Yu Kai Fa Mo Shi De Yan Jiu*, (Nanjing: Southeast University Press, 2002), 78-79.



Figure 14: Today's Xin Tian Di. (Source: Shanghai Archives, [http://www.archives.sh.cn/tpxx/201204/t20120425\\_34833.html](http://www.archives.sh.cn/tpxx/201204/t20120425_34833.html))

Despite the criticism of the project's cruel relocation and redevelopment from academia,<sup>60</sup> the area, more specifically the Xin Tian Di Square, gained huge popularity. The middle to upper class Chinese and foreigners enjoy relaxing and consuming in the lanes of Shi Ku Men Lilong on Xin Tian Di Square. Probably because it was the first of this kind, it became a huge commercial success and was famous across China (Figure 14). All of a sudden people realized that Lilong or historic neighborhoods can be transformed and used to gain such economic interests that other districts in Shanghai and other cities of China wanted to have something more or less like Xin Tian Di.

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<sup>60</sup> Albert Wing Tai Wai, "Place Promotion and Iconography in Shanghai's Xintiandi," *Habitat International*, No. 30, (2006): 247.

The project was finished before the real estate market in Shanghai fully recovered from the downturn in late 1990s and demand rose even higher<sup>61</sup>. Soon after the Xin Tian Di project was completed, it became extremely hard to acquire such a large piece of land and to carry out a similar large-scale commercial development to incorporate a small, fine, low-density Lilong-renovation shopping area. Thus basically no successful replica of Xin Tian Di has been realized in Shanghai.

Although Xin Tian Di is hardly viewed by some scholars as a real preservation project<sup>62</sup> and it would be difficult to reproduce elsewhere, it exhibits the unique attractiveness and economic potential of Lilong in a most striking way. The media and a large population started to appreciate the value of Lilong housings, and it generated wide discussions of the possibility of preserving Lilong neighborhoods<sup>63</sup>.

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<sup>61</sup> Shenjing He, Fulong Wu, "Property-led Redevelopment in Post-reform China: A Case Study of Xintiandi Redevelopment Project in Shanghai," *Journal of Urban Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 1, (2005): 8.

<sup>62</sup> Ping Yao, Ye Zhao, "Ji Yu Shanghai Xintiandi Dui Li Shi Yi Chan Bao Hu Li Yong Wen Ti De Si Kao," *Journal of Eastern Liaoning University (Natural Science)*, Vol. 16, No. 1, (March 2009): 76.

<sup>63</sup> Jinkang Shen, "Lao Shanghai, Xintiandi," *Charming Shanghai*, (January 2003): 60.



Still many real estate developers, local governments and scholars wanted to use the Xin Tian Di model, if not copy it completely<sup>64</sup>. Many believed that history could be represented by simply keeping the exterior look and turning a neighborhood into a shopping district. Some people believed that this was the most convenient way to “preserve” Lilong<sup>65</sup> and to gain profits simultaneously. Soon the reality was proved to be much more complicated and other ways to treat Lilong neighborhoods had to be considered. Moreover, it is still generally accepted among many that most Lilong neighborhoods are too poor or messy to be preserved or to generate revenue, and the only solution is the regular process of demolition, relocation and redevelopment<sup>66</sup>.

Among the relatively few designated Lilongs, some damage has been done while experimenting with new ways of revitalizing the neighborhoods. Four of the cases will be introduced in the next chapters. Important variations exist in architectural style, function of buildings, neighborhood location, composition of

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<sup>64</sup> Bin Zhang, Wanting Zhang, “Da Du Shi Xiu Xian Jie Yan Jiu: Yi Shanghai Xiantiandi Kai Fa Wei Li,” *Economic Forum*, Gen. 457, No. 9, (May 2009): 125.

<sup>65</sup> Linling Chen, “Comparison and Enlightenment of Tourism Real Estate from Songcheng in Hangzhou and Xiantiandi in Shanghai,” *Zhejiang Construction*, Vol. 27, No. 9, (September 2010): 73-74.

<sup>66</sup> Wenbing Fan, *The Conservation and Renewal of LiLong Housing in Shanghai*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2004), 40.

residents, and current condition exist among the Lilong themselves, all of which exert huge impacts on their preservation.

Overall, the efforts aimed at preserving Shanghai Lilong have just started in the last few decades and they are still in the early stages<sup>67</sup>. In terms of the public awareness, huge progress has been seen in recent years. An increasing number of people care about the Lilong and would like to see them preserved. Nevertheless, little attention has been given to the residents' interests while preserving Lilong buildings<sup>68</sup>. Moreover, there remains a lack of specific legal regulations and the enforcement of existing laws is lax. All too often the developers and the government give up equitable preservation solutions in the face of financial interests, like the case of Xintiandi. Without enough financial and governmental support, it is very hard to carry out preservation projects in place of the common way of demolition, relocation and commercial redevelopment.

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<sup>67</sup> Wenbing Fan, *The Conservation and Renewal of LiLong Housing in Shanghai*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2004), 42.

<sup>68</sup> Xiaoming Zhu, Donghai Zhu, *Cite Bourgoigne: A Historical Picture of Living Space in Shanghai Old Alley*, (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 2012), 1-3.

## 1.5. Conclusion

This chapter has summarized some essential background knowledge on the Lilong before launching into a detailed examination of the cases. It is important to understand the basic social context where this housing type was born, and its architectural affiliations with both China and the West, which to some degree shows Shanghai's role as an interface between the above two different cultures. As the Chinese society transforms in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Lilong housing is left as less and less adapted, which can be viewed as the direct reason for its being endangered. The way that the current land market works renders its status even worse. However, there has been constant efforts in Shanghai aiming at preserving the Lilong, with very different outcomes.

## CHAPTER 2. TIAN ZI FANG: THE RENEWED ARTISTIC COMMUNITY

### 2.0. Introduction

This chapter provides an example of a Lilong neighborhood that underwent a considerable transformation, but it did not involve total demolition. The discussion here shows how the economic adjustments in China generally and in Shanghai specifically often spurred the government to provide leases to developers who attempted to build new housing blocks. In the case of Tian Zi Fang (田子坊), however, the plan was stalled, giving artists a chance to establish themselves and for low income residents to benefit from the rents. The recognition from the government came later on and so did the top-down administration of the transformation.

### 2.1. Early Development and Mixed Functions

Tian Zi Fang is located in Lane 210 Tai Kang Road, Luwan District (Figure 15). The neighborhood called Tian Zi Fang today was chiefly formed in the 1910s and 1920s. The area was included into the French Concession during its third

expansion.<sup>69</sup> The four streets surrounding the area provide some clues of the blocks' early development.

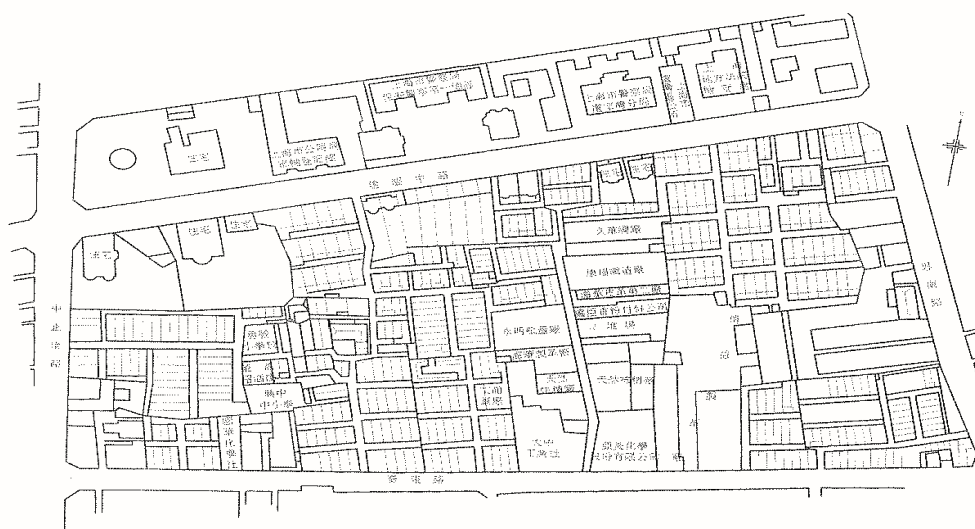


图 6-29 泰康路以北街区 1947 年地籍行号

Figure 15: Plan of Tai Kang Road Block/Tian Zi Fang in 1947. (Source: *The Death and Life of Shanghai Alley Factories*, 144)

Route Stanislas Chevalier to the north, known as Mid Jian Guo Road today, was constructed in 1902. It is the earliest among the four and was the closest to the French Concession. Route Pere Robert to the west was built in 1907 and assigned to the French Concession in 1914.<sup>70</sup> It is now named No. 2 Rui

<sup>69</sup> Yan Zuo, Yanqing An, *The Death and Life of Shanghai Alley Factories*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2012), 141.

<sup>70</sup> Wanyao Sun, *People's Way of Conservation: The Study of Tianzi Fang Shanghai on its Bottom-up Revitalization*, (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, MSc. Conservation, 2010), 29.

Jin Road. Rue Massenet, built in 1914 and called Si Nan Road today forms the eastern border of the area. Some changes of the streets' names happened in 1943 and the three current names came into being in either 1946 or 1950. It wasn't until 1926, with the construction of Rue Cassini to the south, that the whole area of today's Tian Zi Fang was enclosed. The streets were originally developed in the order of the west- and southward expansion of the French Concession<sup>71</sup>. The name Tai Kang Road replaced Rue Cassini in 1943<sup>72</sup>, and was used to represent the whole neighborhood before the invention of the title "Tian Zi Fang".

Because of its location at the French Concession's southern boundary and facing the former Chinese Town across the historic Xu Jia River, the area is subject to both foreign and Chinese influences. Thus the architectural forms and functions of the area exhibit a great variety, which came to play a fundamental role in its most recent revitalization.

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<sup>71</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, *Cite Bourgogne: A Historical Picture of Living Space in Shanghai Old Alley*, (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 2012), 17.

<sup>72</sup> Yanning Li, "Tian Zi Fang Shanghai Li Shi Jie Qu Geng Xin De Zi Xia Er Shang Yang Ben," *China Cultural Heritage*, No. 3, (2011): 39.

Among the residential types, the most common in the southern part of the area are the Shi Ku Men Lilong while the north and west portions were dominated by more expensive garden houses and New Type Lilongs. Both of these were typical in the northern and western areas of French Concession.

The south-eastern part was during that time very close to the historic rivers, Luo Jia Wan and Zhao Jia Bang, before they were filled for roadways. With the economic development and urban expansion, some mid- to small-scale factories had begun to cluster around this area to take advantage of the water transportation since the 1920s. Because it was distant from the center of the concession, some highly polluting factories were built nearby. These ranged from paper and leather manufacturing to chemical production. By 1940 about 20 factories of all forms were located within the area. This was reduced to 17 by 1947<sup>73</sup>.

Before Liberation, the factories were mostly privately owned. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, all of them became

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<sup>73</sup> Yanning Li, "Tian Zi Fang Shanghai Li Shi Jie Qu Geng Xin De Zi Xia Er Shang Yang Ben," *China Cultural Heritage*, No. 3, (2011): 39.

nationalized. Some small-scale workshops were turned into residential housing. Those larger in scale were transformed into state-operated factories and to a large part continued their original functions<sup>74</sup>. Very few buildings were removed and not many major architectural changes were made in the early years of the PRC.

With the dissolution of foreign concessions at the end of 1940s and the demolition of the old Chinese city walls, a new system of administration districts was adopted by the Communist's government to reorganize and integrate the whole urban area. The neighborhood of Lane 210 Tai Kang Road literally became located in the center area of the city of Shanghai, administered under Luwan District, instead of merely a bordering neighborhood of the French Concession, which no longer existed.

## 2.2. Deserted Factories and the Artists

As China began to open up around the 1980s, Shanghai started to rediscover its potential to be an economic center. Not surprisingly, the neighborhood of

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<sup>74</sup> Yan Zuo, Yanqing An, *The Death and Life of Shanghai Alley Factories*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2012), 149.



Lane 210 Tai Kang Road began to find itself changing. With the advancement of technology and economics, the factories in the neighborhood were no longer competitive and were almost deserted.

From 1994 to the year 2000, Luwan District officially carried out an economic adjustment. Manufacturing factories were urged to transform into the Third Industry, or the Service Industry. Due to this policy, almost all of the factories in Lane 210 Tai Kang Road were closed.<sup>75</sup> A few were demolished, but the majority of the properties were emptied and became available for rental. At the same time, the first wave of real estate development in Shanghai occurred. As the city's redevelopment of old urban areas started, some new high-rise residential communities were built near the neighborhood where former factories or housing had been demolished.

With more changes occurring, some old ways of life in the neighborhood were threatened. One of the noteworthy historic features of the area was the thriving street market on Tai Kang Road. Against the background of further

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<sup>75</sup> Yan Zuo, Yanqing An, *The Death and Life of Shanghai Alley Factories*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2012), 149-150.

urban modernization and new residential development surrounding the area, the street market remained indispensable for common residents' daily life. It became very problematic, however, with respect to sanitation and transportation. As the poorest residential district in Luwan at that time<sup>76</sup>, the Dapu Residential District (the neighborhood administration where Lane 210 Tai Kand Road has been) was faced with a difficult situation where several important elements of public infrastructure, like the market, needed essential improvements, but very little funding was available.

For the local government, the easiest and most obvious way out was to sell land-use rights to developers who would initiate demolition of old buildings, construction of new housing, and forced relocation of original residents. This is the typical way of urban redevelopment taking off after the '80s in the majority of Shanghai's inner city.

The then newly-assigned officer Zheng Rongfa of Dapu Residential District decided to rent one of the empty factory spaces to accommodate the market.

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<sup>76</sup> Ronglin Zhu, *Jie Du Tianzifang: Wo Guo Cheng Shi Ke Chi Xu Fa Zhan Mo Shi De Tan Suo*, (Shanghai: Wen Hui Books, November 2009), 16.

Since the rent was very cheap, the neighborhood could manage to move the market in 1998<sup>77</sup> at a low cost, with 3 million Yuan borrowed from the municipal district level government<sup>78</sup>. This success to a large degree encouraged the local government and more importantly, opened up the potential for reusing the former factories in alternative ways, avoiding dramatic demolition and redevelopment.

The overall land prices and increasing density of inner city Shanghai had other effects. For example, the extremely low rent and large space of the deserted factories seemed especially appealing to artists. Near the end of the same year that the market was relocated, a cultural development corporation moved into one of the factories, with the encouragement of the government of Dapu Residential District. In the same year, 1998, one of the most famous contemporary Chinese painters, Chen Yifei, set up his studio in Lane 210 Tai Kang Road<sup>79</sup>. Other artists followed him, like photographer Er Dongqiang<sup>80</sup>.

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<sup>77</sup> "Guan Yu Tianzifang," <http://www.tianzifang.cn/about>, last accessed on Mar. 28, 2013.

<sup>78</sup> Ronglin Zhu, *Jie Du Tianzifang: Wo Guo Cheng Shi Ke Chi Xu Fa Zhan Mo Shi De Tan Suo*, (Shanghai: Wen Hui Books, November 2009), 18.

<sup>79</sup> Xiang Kong, Junjie Qian, "An Analysis of the development of Creative Industry and Reconstruction of Tianzifang Area in Shanghai," *Human Geography*, Vol. 26, No. 3, (June 2011): 47.

In October 2001, the former Shanghai Food Machine Factory, a five-story building in the neighborhood, was turned into a center for artistic creation. Also in 2001, painter Huang Yongyu slightly altered the name of an ancient painter mentioned in the traditional Chinese classic Zhuang Zi and used it to name the neighborhood of Lane 210 Tai Kang Road as “Tian Zi Fang”.<sup>81</sup>



Figure 16: Art Galleries in Tian Zi Fang. (Source: <http://cultureofchinese.com/travel/shanghai-attractions-famous-streets-buildings/>)

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<sup>80</sup> Wanyao Sun, *People's Way of Conservation: The Study of Tianzi Fang Shanghai on its Bottom-up Revitalization*, (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, MSc. Conservation, 2010), 45.

<sup>81</sup> Yanning Li, “Tian Zi Fang Shanghai Li Shi Jie Qu Geng Xin De Zi Xia Er Shang Yang Ben,” *China Cultural Heritage*, No. 3, (2011): 41.

### 2.3. Change of Residential Component and Strive for Official Recognition

The district level government remained skeptical about the residential district's "experiment", which was characterized by low cost, small-scale investment, with a short cycle of small returns. All of the above seemed to contradict the strategy of one-of clearing of old housing and favoring large-scale real estate redevelopment. In addition, the real estate market in Shanghai became increasingly hot at the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century. The generally preferred method promised a huge income for the developer and for the government officials.

Hence, despite the artistic occupation of some old buildings in Tian Zi Fang, the government of Luwan District published its detailed official development plan in 2004, which explicitly stated that the Tian Zi Fang area was to be replaced. All of the Shi Ku Men and New Type Lilongs, garden houses would be demolished and new high-rise buildings would be built<sup>82</sup>. It is worth noting that the residential housing was still mostly occupied by the original residents.

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<sup>82</sup> Hai Yu, "Narration of Historic Block Renovation in Power and Concept Dimensions: Case of Tianzifang in Shanghai," *Social Sciences in Nanjing*, No. 4, (2011): 24.

Shortly after, real estate developers known as ASE Group tendered a bid on the land in Lanes 274 and 248 on Tai Kang Road<sup>83</sup> and the residents in those two lanes started preparing for relocation. Some already moved out before reaching an agreement with the developer. Others, mostly elderly, were reluctant to move and stayed. The houses in the two lanes were gradually emptied and the original life of the neighborhood became ever more fragmented.

Unfortunately, or fortunately enough from other perspectives, the redevelopment was not carried out as smoothly as expected. In part because of the construction of new subway line to the south of Tai Kang Road, the above-ground new development faced many added restrictions and difficulties. This also influenced the development to the north of Tai Kang Road, since the lands on both sides were under the name of the same real estate developer,

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<sup>83</sup> Yanning Li, "Tian Zi Fang Shanghai Li Shi Jie Qu Geng Xin De Zi Xia Er Shang Yang Ben," *China Cultural Heritage*, No. 3, (2011): 41.

ASE.<sup>84</sup> Therefore the redevelopment of Tai Kang Road neighborhood was indefinitely delayed.

Yet the local residents did not merely wait for their fate to be decided. Although they did not hold out much hope about preserving their original homes, the intrinsic carefulness and acumen of Shanghainese came into play. The surrounding factories in the area were already occupied by lively artistic activities. Because the neighborhood still held a central location, the empty Lilong housing was in fact desirable in the rental market. Starting in 2004<sup>85</sup>, in part inspired by the nearby factories' revival, some original residents who had found new homes, rented out their apartments in Tian Zi Fang area for short terms to small creative industries. Residents also rented out their Lilong housing and moved to live on upper floors or in other places where the rent was much lower and improved their lives by grasping the gap between the rents. Moreover, many renters more or less renovated the Lilong buildings, besides paying rents. Some even hired the original residents for simple

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<sup>84</sup> Yanning Li, "Tian Zi Fang Shanghai Li Shi Jie Qu Geng Xin De Zi Xia Er Shang Yang Ben," *China Cultural Heritage*, No. 3, (2011): 42.

<sup>85</sup> Yan Zuo, Yanqing An, *The Death and Life of Shanghai Alley Factories*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2012), 151.

jobs.<sup>86</sup> All of the above dramatically improved the original residents' income and living standards, whether they were still living in the neighborhood or not, considering that the residents in historic Lilong housing today mostly belonged to the lower economic class.

This situation was also understood by the local government of Dapu Residential District. Having known the residents, witnessed the situation changing, and some of the improvements occurring, local governors like Zheng Rongfa proposed to keep the neighborhood with its historic Lilongs, and to further carry out the “experiment” of introducing creative industry to benefit the residents. At first, there was a difference of opinion between the street-level government leaders and the district level government.<sup>87</sup> No final conclusion was reached, however, which rendered the situation undetermined and unresolved. Thus began the several-year long struggle and exploration of Tian Zi Fang neighborhood.

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<sup>86</sup> Yanning Li, “Tian Zi Fang Shanghai Li Shi Jie Qu Geng Xin De Zi Xia Er Shang Yang Ben,” *China Cultural Heritage*, No. 3, (2011): 42.

<sup>87</sup> Hai Yu, “Narration of Historic Block Renovation in Power and Concept Dimensions: Case of Tianzifang in Shanghai,” *Social Sciences in Nanjing*, No. 4, (2011): 24.



Apparently the reuse of factories was more acceptable to the top government officials than the continued use of the Lilong. The plan in 2004 did not intend to demolish the factory buildings and there already existed a neighborhood office to administer and attract investment to them<sup>88</sup>. The factory area was officially re-named a “Creative Industrial Zone” in 2005<sup>89</sup>. To monitor the unofficial re-development, in 2006 the Lilong residents of the neighborhood spontaneously established a committee to collect statistics of the non-residential uses of Lilong buildings and to contact the business owners. With extra incomes, the residents also pooled their money to repair the pavement and the streetlights in the neighborhood, which in return helped to justify the rise in the rent.<sup>90</sup> At the same time, the neighborhood government persisted in trying to convince the district level government to give up the official plan of demolition and to promote the current way of flexibly revitalizing the area.

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<sup>88</sup> Yanning Li, “Tian Zi Fang Shanghai Li Shi Jie Qu Geng Xin De Zi Xia Er Shang Yang Ben,” *China Cultural Heritage*, No. 3, (2011): 43.

<sup>89</sup> Xiang Kong, Junjie Qian, “An Analysis of the development of Creative Industry and Reconstruction of Tianzifang Area in Shanghai,” *Human Geography*, Vol. 26, No. 3, (June 2011): 47.

<sup>90</sup> Ronglin Zhu, *Jie Du Tianzifang: Wo Guo Cheng Shi Ke Chi Xu Fa Zhan Mo Shi De Tan Suo*, (Shanghai: Wen Hui Books, November 2009), 39.

The new commercial businesses in the Lilong were at the beginning mostly targeted at the artists and employees working in the area's creative industries. As the neighborhood gained its fame for artistic activities within a historic Shanghai Lilong area, however, more people were drawn there to visit and more stores opened up. Soon, a conflict arose between residential uses and commercial interests. At the outset everything was harmonious, because the artists were working quietly. The catering businesses and bars were different however, in that they bring noise at night, create garbage and smells, and take up street space. Most residents who lived on the upper floors started to complain about these nuisances and problems. Some could not rent out their apartments as easily, like the lower floors, which are more desirable for business. Also, some renters made major changes to the buildings' structural capacity, which caused safety issues. The government of Luwan District did not interfere the alterations because the neighborhood was still officially waiting to be demolished, and there was no guidance or regulations for it to follow.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Yanning Li, "Tian Zi Fang Shanghai Li Shi Jie Qu Geng Xin De Zi Xia Er Shang Yang Ben," *China Cultural Heritage*, No. 3, (2011): 44.

Although the neighborhood experienced all of these conflicts, the developer of the area still made no progress and was lacking the capability to carry out the plan. Thus the rent continued to climb, with an increased number of commercial transformations. According to the neighborhood's committee, the number of storefronts in the residential buildings changed from basically zero to 30 from the beginning of 2005 to April 2006, and reached 100 in November 2006<sup>92</sup>. Some stayers moved out, for they could no longer tolerate the disturbance from the commercial activities.

On the other hand, its popularity brought wide support from the media, and reputable scholars like Yuan Yisan and Zheng Shiling from the College of Architecture and Urban Planning of Tongji University. Even a few Party Central papers like *People's Daily* and *Liberation Daily* released articles promoting Tian Zi Fang, which indicates different opinions between different levels of the government towards this issue.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Yanning Li, "Tian Zi Fang Shanghai Li Shi Jie Qu Geng Xin De Zi Xia Er Shang Yang Ben," *China Cultural Heritage*, No. 3, (2011): 44.

<sup>93</sup> Hai Yu, "Narration of Historic Block Renovation in Power and Concept Dimensions: Case of Tianzifang in Shanghai," *Social Sciences in Nanjing*, No. 4, (2011): 27.

## 2.4. Preservation Plan and Further Commercialization

In 2007 the debate over the fate of Tian Zi Fang reached its peak and finally the government of Luwan District accepted the alternative strategy to preserve and revitalize the area instead of redeveloping it completely<sup>94</sup>. The goal then became to fix the mess and muddle and to transform the major function of the neighborhood from residential to non-residential. The Lands Department of Luwan District was responsible for redeeming the lands (the land use rights) already sold and to provide other lands to the developer ASE. In 2008, all the sold lands had been redeemed; the policy was adjusted to keep the mix of residential and commercial functions. A new official detailed plan was compiled, which included historic preservation and the advancement of infrastructure. The new plan was divided into two phases, with the first phase embracing the already-kept factory area and the second phase aiming to transform the recently saved Lilong area into creative space<sup>95</sup>.

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<sup>94</sup> Yanning Li, "Tian Zi Fang Shanghai Li Shi Jie Qu Geng Xin De Zi Xia Er Shang Yang Ben," *China Cultural Heritage*, No. 3, (2011): 45.

<sup>95</sup> Yan Zuo, Yanqing An, *The Death and Life of Shanghai Alley Factories*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2012), 149-154.

By this point, the Luwan District government had apparently seen the potential business opportunity and political achievement that Tian Zi Fang could bring. The District now intended to present the neighborhood as one of its highlights, to welcome the World Expo held in Shanghai in 2010<sup>96</sup>. An official administrative committee was founded in April and the governance of Tian Zi Fang was formally taken over from nongovernmental organizations to governmental agencies<sup>97</sup> in order to put everything in order as soon as possible. Following this transition a governmental fund of 10 million RMB was put aside for the improvement of the infrastructure of the neighborhood<sup>98</sup>. With the promotion of the government, business boomed and the popularity of Tian Zi Fang quickly reached a new peak.

Thereafter Tian Zi Fang was often held up as a model of redeveloping a Lilong area and a successful case of bottom-up preservation action. Meanwhile, the conflicts between the residents and the commercial entrepreneurs have

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<sup>96</sup> “Luwan Sub-bureau: Ji Ji Fu Wu Tianzifang Fa Zhan, Duo Cuo Bing Ju Ca Liang Shi Bo Ming Pian,” *Administration for Industry and Commerce*, No. 22, (2012): 64.

<sup>97</sup> Yanning Li, “Tian Zi Fang Shanghai Li Shi Jie Qu Geng Xin De Zi Xia Er Shang Yang Ben,” *China Cultural Heritage*, No. 3, (2011): 45-46.

<sup>98</sup> Yan Zuo, Yanqing An, *The Death and Life of Shanghai Alley Factories*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 2012) 155.

intensified. According to the finding of the government-sponsored surveyer Ronglin Zhu, though all of the surveyed residents were satisfied with the renovation of Tianzifang, 74.13% of them were dissatisfied with the living environment<sup>99</sup>. Moreover, the newspapers, television<sup>100</sup> and business people<sup>101</sup> oftentimes neglect the residents' worries as they prioritize the commercial and branding value of Tian Zi Fang. Although most original residents have gained income from the revitalization of the neighborhood, they remain almost powerless in the process.

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<sup>99</sup> Ronglin Zhu, *Jie Du Tianzifang: Wo Guo Cheng Shi Ke Chi Xu Fa Zhan Mo Shi De Tan Suo*, (Shanghai: Wen Hui Books, November 2009), 40.

<sup>100</sup> Xiaoxia Deng, "Tianzifang: Bu Shi 'Xiantiandi', Er Shi Lao Shanghai," *China Newsweek*, 13<sup>th</sup> December, (2010): 78.

<sup>101</sup> Xiaoxia Chen, "Cong Tianzifang De Cheng Gong Kan Chuang Yi Di Chan De Fa Zhan," *Marketing Research*, No. 1, (2011): 26.



Figure 17: Tian Zi Fang Today. (Source: [http://club.pchome.net/thread\\_2\\_3\\_6281295\\_\\_.html](http://club.pchome.net/thread_2_3_6281295__.html))

In Wanyao Sun's interviews of different people in Tian Zi Fang<sup>102</sup>, the only resident she interviewed was a most reluctant and conservative one. The interviewee was one of the last original residents who had not rented out the first floor of his housing unit. He seemed determined not to rent it to others. Having been born in the neighborhood and been living there for more than 40 years, he stated his reason for not moving or letting as "personal", with no further explanations. And when asked if he was satisfied about the change,

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<sup>102</sup> Wanyao Sun, *People's Way of Conservation: The Study of Tianzi Fang Shanghai on its Bottom-up Revitalization*, (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, MSc. Conservation, 2010), 55.

he replied by questioning “does it make sense (does it matter) if I say no?” and then went on saying “after all, it does not bother our routine life but brings some pleasure.”

Obviously the resident felt insecure by comparison to the shop owners and the artists who were also interviewed. He did not feel comfortable to express his feelings to the interviewer. His attitude was more of accepting the situation than taking an active part in it or cordially welcoming it. At the same time, he may have discovered that his situation was better compared to many other Lilong neighborhoods. The artist interviewee, also, had his own concerns about the fast rising rent which reduced the neighborhood’s advantage<sup>103</sup>. However, he expressed general optimism and a passion toward the renewed neighborhood, which differed greatly from the resident. It is worth noting that among the four published interviews, three of them were of artists and designers working or doing business there, and only one was of a resident. It might be that the former group was more open to being interviewed than

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<sup>103</sup> Wanyao Sun, *People’s Way of Conservation: The Study of Tianzi Fang Shanghai on its Bottom-up Revitalization*, (Hong Kong: University of Hong Kong, MSc. Conservation, 2010), 47.



residents, or that the author herself was not as interested in the residents' opinion as in that of the other group.

The official recognition and commercial success Tian Zi Fang has achieved brought the risk of transforming it into a completely non-residential, shopping district. Even the artists might be forced to leave in the end. The tendency is already appearing to some extent, but can be controlled so that the residents' ignored rights could be defended and they could truly benefit from their renewed neighborhood. Before its recent transformation, the residents in Shi Ku Men Lilong and factories within the neighborhood had lived very much in peace with each other. There is no reason that the creative industry and the residents nowadays have to separate completely or that one has to leave the neighborhood for the other to take over. On the other hand, as more and more business open up in Tianzifang, the competition becomes ever fiercer. In 2009, a survey targeted the businesses established there and, surprisingly, found that of the interviewees were dissatisfied with (a) their profits, (b) the business environment, and (c) the cost of entering the market, respectively

67.85%, 71.42% and 71.43%<sup>104</sup>. An essential future challenge is to optimize the business environment and use Tianzifang's popularity to provide economic sustainability. In any case it should be always kept in mind that what renders Tian Zi Fang unique and differs it from most other Lilongs or any creative industry sites is the co-mingling of different functions and building types, the fact that the artistic activities are closely ingrained into the original common residential lives of Shi Ku Men Lilong in Shanghai<sup>105</sup>.

## 2.5. Conclusion

In the case of Tian Zi Fang, many different forces shaped it into a lively artistic community today, including its unique mixed-use building components. The efforts of the neighborhood level government should not be undervalued, however. Without the neighborhood's support, the initial wave of artists' occupation in the community would not have come into effect. What's more, the neighborhood government also played an important role in persuading the

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<sup>104</sup> Ronglin Zhu, *Jie Du Tianzifang: Wo Guo Cheng Shi Ke Chi Xu Fa Zhan Mo Shi De Tan Suo*, (Shanghai: Wen Hui Books, November 2009), 39.

<sup>105</sup> Xiang Kong, Junjie Qian, "An Analysis of the development of Creative Industry and Reconstruction of Tianzifang Area in Shanghai," *Human Geography*, Vol. 26, No. 3, (June 2011): 50.

district leaders to accept the “second-phase” renewal of the Lilong buildings.

When we say “spontaneous” preservation, it must be clarified who in fact were the “spontaneous” forces. It was not only the residents who rented out their places to the artists and the shop owners, but also the neighborhood government that facilitated and incorporated these efforts.

## CHAPTER 3. JIAN YE LI: FROM MUNDANE TO LUXIOUS

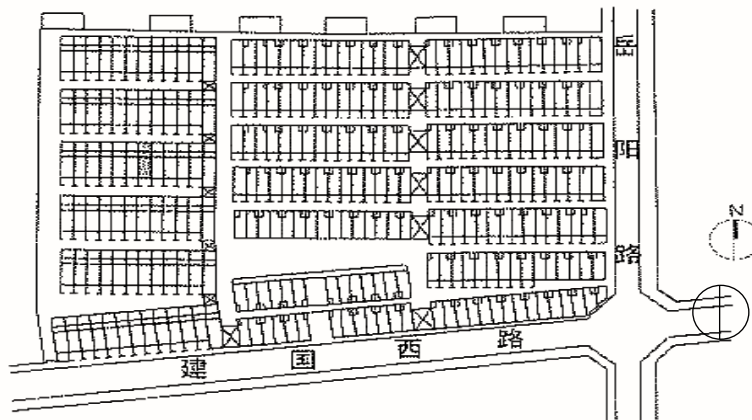
### 3.0. Introduction

The project discussed in this chapter, Jian Ye Li (建业里), was undertaken by both the government and real estate developers. Although it was defined as a pilot Lilong preservation project, it had been carried out in a fashion similar to most common commercial redevelopment projects, with cruel relocation in the process. The developers' efforts in trying to combine the preservation goals with commercial interests by demolition and rebuilding two of the three lanes incited surprisingly wide criticism from the public. As a result, the sale of the newly "renovated" housing was suspended and the whole project was faced with an uncertain future.

### 3.1. Significance in Scale, Mundane in Nature

Jian Ye Li is among the new type Shi Ku Men Lilongs in the former French Concession. The neighborhood consists of three sections, the East Lane, the Middle Lane and the West Lane, also known as Lane 440, 456 and 496 West

Jian Guo Road (Figure 18). Jian Ye Li is situated about 5 blocks to the west of Tian Zi Fang, but it was formed earlier.



11至15户构成一栋，除一小部分为双开间外，大部分为单开间住宅，共计154户规模

Figure 18: Site Plan of Jian Ye Li. (Source: *The Shanghai Housing After Its Opening to Foreigners*, 69)

The builder of Jian Ye Li was a French company called Fonciere et Immobiliere de Chine, which was translated into “中国建业地产公司(China Jian Ye Real Estate Company)” in Chinese. It was a branch company of a French corporation called the International Savings Society, which had its headquarter in Shanghai and owned a number of well-known apartment

buildings and properties in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>106</sup>. Before the liberation of Shanghai, it was the largest French local real estate company.

The East and Middle Lanes were designed in 1928 and 1929<sup>107</sup>, and constructed in 1930. The West Lane was designed in 1930 and built in 1938<sup>108</sup>. Because of the difference in construction year and the time gap, the East and Middle Lanes are more closely linked together while the West Lane is separated from the other two by a 110-meter-long gabled wall. Also, the West Lane is more spacious than the other two in terms of both architecture interior and outdoor space. The Lilong buildings in the West Lane are generally more delicately decorated with details than the other two lanes<sup>109</sup>. This slight division within the neighborhood to a great degree spurred different results in the recent project, which will be discussed later.

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<sup>106</sup> Shanghai Zhangming Architectural Design Firm, *Lao Long Tang Jian Ye Li*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Far East Publishers, 2009), 59-61.

<sup>107</sup> Ruxiang Zhang, Wei Miu, "Shi Ku Men Lilong De Zai Sheng: Jianyeli Bao Hu Zheng Zhi Shi Dian Xiang Mu De She Ji," *Shanghai Construction Science & Technology*, No. 3, (2008): 6.

<sup>108</sup> Hua Lin, "Preliminary Probe into Protective Repairs and Energy Saving Technologies of Historical Buildings: Take Protective Project of West Alley Jianyeli for Example," *Housing Science*, (November 2010): 43.

<sup>109</sup> Ruxiang Zhang, Wei Miu, "Shi Ku Men Lilong De Zai Sheng: Jianyeli Bao Hu Zheng Zhi Shi Dian Xiang Mu De She Ji," *Shanghai Construction Science & Technology*, No. 3, (2008): 6.

Although even in the original design of the neighborhood there were various storefronts in the outermost rows facing the street now called Jian Guo Road<sup>110</sup>, Jian Ye Li has been a block dominated by residential functions. Its large scale in area and the holistic two-phase development by a single company has made it the biggest new type Shi Ku Men Lilong neighborhood still existing in Shanghai.

Like many other Shi Ku Men Lilong units, since the 1940s Jian Ye Li has seen an increasingly unbearable high density and a serious deterioration. Property rights and ownerships have become obscure after times of revolution, regime alteration and nationalization. Moreover, people have been adding rooms and altering the buildings with their limited skills and budget over the years<sup>111</sup>, especially in the East and Middle Lanes, where the spaces were more limited than the West Lane. All of the above commonly-seen Lilong housing problems worsened the condition of Jian Ye Li.

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<sup>110</sup> Shanghai Zhangming Architectural Design Firm, *Lao Long Tang Jian Ye Li*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Far East Publishers, 2009), 67.

<sup>111</sup> Ruxiang Zhang, Wei Miu, "Shi Ku Men Lilong De Zai Sheng: Jianyeli Bao Hu Zheng Zhi Shi Dian Xiang Mu De She Ji," *Shanghai Construction Science & Technology*, No. 3, (2008): 6.

Probably because of its poor condition and less than outstanding architectural value, the government categorized it as Level 4<sup>112</sup> when including it in the second group of Excellent Historic Architecture of Shanghai, which means it was given a relatively low level of protection. The regulations to protect Level 4 Excellent Historic Architecture require that the buildings' main façades be preserved, but other alterations are allowed<sup>113</sup>.

It is also worth noting that the neighborhood is included in the Hengshan Road-Fuxing Road Historic Cultural Area of Shanghai, which is the largest of the twelve Historic Cultural Areas in the inner city, announced in 2003<sup>114</sup>. This designated area is mostly where the former French Concession existed and it incorporates a large number of garden houses, apartment buildings and a few Lilongs. The regulations of Historic Cultural Area of Shanghai mainly deal with

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<sup>112</sup> Richen Wang, "Xufang Ji Tuan Shi Chan Quan, Tu Di Zhi Mi: Jian Ye Li Yun Niang Fan Xiu," *Renmin Ribao*, 14<sup>th</sup> Febuary, (2012), <http://house.people.com.cn/GB/17103766.html>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013.

<sup>113</sup> "Shanghai Shi Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Qu He You Xiu Li Shi Jian Zhu Bao Hu Tiao Li," <http://www.shanghai.gov.cn/shanghai/node2314/node3124/node3177/node3181/u6ai1126.html>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013.

<sup>114</sup> Siqing Min, *Cheng Shi Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Bao Hu Qu Kong Jian De Sheng Chan Ji Zhi Yan Jiu: Yi Shanghai Shi Hengshan Lu-Fuxing Lu Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Bao Hu Qu Wei Li*, (Shanghai: East China Normal University, Master's Degree, 2007), 26-27.



the preservation of street and block patterns, architectural exterior, and restrictions on new construction<sup>115</sup>.

### 3.2. “Pilot Project” under the Marketing Principle

Against this background, after the designation of Hengshan Road-Fuxing Road Historic Cultural Area, Jian Ye Li was put on the top list of the city’s key preservation and reuse projects in the same year. The government called all of these the “Pilot Projects”, or the “Testing Sites”<sup>116</sup>, which clearly indicates that the strategy for preservation was not certain and there was little experience to rely upon. Jian Ye Li was selected as a Lilong example to carry out the new preservation and reuse policy.

In the first stage, the project was in the charge of Hengfu Real Estate Ltd (衡复置业有限公司), which was a branch company of the Xufang Group (徐房集团), a state-owned corporation established by the Housing and Land

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<sup>115</sup> “Shanghai Shi Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Qu He You Xiu Li Shi Jian Zhu Bao Hu Tiao Li,” <http://www.shanghai.gov.cn/shanghai/node2314/node3124/node3177/node3181/u6ai1126.html>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013.

<sup>116</sup> “Portman Jianyeli Zhu Zhai,” <http://www.portmanholdings.com/zh-hans/projects/%E6%B3%A2%E7%89%B9%E6%9B%BC%E5%BB%BA%E4%B8%9A%E9%87%8C%E4%BD%8F%E5%AE%85>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013.

Administration Bureau of Xuhui District<sup>117</sup>. Hengfu Real Estate Ltd was especially set up to conduct renovation and redevelopment projects for historic sites in Xuhui District. However, with little experience in large scale preservation and reuse projects, the government turned to the method that it had been most familiar: the commercial redevelopment model to apply to the preservation project of Jian Ye Li.

Almost all large-scale commercial redevelopments of Lilong neighborhoods begin with the relocation of original residents. Before the project was physically launched, the government announced to the residents that they would be the priority group to move back to Jian Ye Li after the completion of the renovation<sup>118</sup>. Nevertheless, later in 2004 the residents were told to choose from two sites in the outermost city where they would be relocated<sup>119</sup>.

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<sup>117</sup> Siqing Min, *Cheng Shi Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Bao Hu Qu Kong Jian De Sheng Chan Ji Zhi Yan Jiu: Yi Shanghai Shi Hengshan Lu-Fuxing Lu Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Bao Hu Qu Wei Li*, (Shanghai: East China Normal University, Master's Degree, 2007), 35.

<sup>118</sup> Jiayi Tang, "Xun Mi You Xiu Jian Zhu Bao Hu Zhi Lu: Fang Tongji Da Xue Luo Xiaowei, Ruan Yisan, Zhang Song Jiao Shou," *Shanghai Ren Da*, (April 2006): 19-20.

<sup>119</sup> Siqing Min, *Cheng Shi Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Bao Hu Qu Kong Jian De Sheng Chan Ji Zhi Yan Jiu: Yi Shanghai Shi Hengshan Lu-Fuxing Lu Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Bao Hu Qu Wei Li*, (Shanghai: East China Normal University, Master's Degree, 2007), 37.

The brutality of the following relocation process of Jian Ye Li did not change, but simply followed numerous other examples.

Understandably, the residents did not want to easily give up their inner city location, nor did they place much trust in the government or Hengfu Ltd's words. Most of them knew that they would have to move out in the end so they tried to negotiate with the Hengfu Ltd. representatives in order to get as much compensation as possible. Hengfu Ltd dealt with the relocation conflicts exactly like other real estate developers. According to the residents, the company hired people with sticks to threaten them, to damage their properties, to intentionally make noises in the lanes at night, and to keep watch. When the residents turned to the police, they were mostly turned away, directed to other offices and offered no help.<sup>120</sup> In the end, most people were "lucky" enough to get some compensation to pay for part of their new residences in the outskirts of Shanghai, but some long-time residents did not have adequate

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<sup>120</sup> "Shanghai Jianyeli Ju Min Lu Deyin De Xue Lei Kong Su," <http://www.canyu.org/n16381c6.aspx>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013.

proof of their period of residence or current ownership and could not get any compensation to be relocated<sup>121</sup>.

One might ask if the official historic designation of Jian Ye Li made any difference in the relocation process. Judging from the accounts of the relocated residents, the title of Shanghai Excellent Historic Architecture did not seem to help the original residents who were living in the designated buildings. On the contrary, preservation was used as a justification for relocation regardless of the residents' needs<sup>122</sup>. After a series of negotiations, fights and struggles, the original residents were all relocated before 2006 and the Lilongs were emptied to get ready for renovation.

In fact, during the process of relocation, Jian Ye Li suffered damages because of the fights and the strong measures taken by the hired people to force the

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<sup>121</sup> "Shanghai Shi Xuhui Qu 'Shi Ji Bao Hu Jian Zhu Dan Wei' Jianyeli Zao Yu Qiang Chai," (*Bo Xun Wang*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2009, <http://news.bboxun.com/news/gb/china/2009/05/200905032201.shtml>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013).

<sup>122</sup> "Shanghai Shi Xuhui Qu 'Shi Ji Bao Hu Jian Zhu Dan Wei' Jianyeli Zao Yu Qiang Chai," (*Bo Xun Wang*, 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2009, <http://news.bboxun.com/news/gb/china/2009/05/200905032201.shtml>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013).

residents to sign agreements<sup>123</sup>. As a result, when a panel discussion of Jian Ye Li's preservation project was held in June of 2005<sup>124</sup>, many Lilong buildings were in even worse condition than when the project began. This was especially true in the East and Middle Lanes, making more difficult the possibility of completely saving and reusing the buildings. At the same time, the regulations for the Level 4 designation do not in principle prohibit demolition and rebuilding of the designated buildings, but rather require consensus from the expert committee to carry out demolition. Under these circumstances, it was very uncertain whether all of the remaining buildings in Jian Ye Li would be kept. It is generally believed that it is easier to demolish those buildings in bad condition and rebuild new ones to accommodate more rooms and better facilities rather than to preserve and renovate old properties. Despite the slow process of gaining approval, it was said that the demolition of

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<sup>123</sup> Jiamin Yu, "Jianyeli Gai Zao Diao Cha," *Zao Bao*, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2012, [http://house.ifeng.com/rollnews/detail\\_2012\\_02/13/12464440\\_0.shtml](http://house.ifeng.com/rollnews/detail_2012_02/13/12464440_0.shtml), last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013).

<sup>124</sup> Siqing Min, *Cheng Shi Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Bao Hu Qu Kong Jian De Sheng Chan Ji Zhi Yan Jiu: Yi Shanghai Shi Hengshan Lu-Fuxing Lu Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Bao Hu Qu Wei Li*, (Shanghai: East China Normal University, Master's Degree, 2007), 37.

a part of the lanes actually started near the end of 2005<sup>125</sup>. The bold manner can be explained by the corporation's close relationship with the government of Xuhui District.

To share the risk of the redevelopment, which was stressed by the large cost of the relocation process (about 7 to 8 hundred million RMB<sup>126</sup>), at the beginning of 2006 the government held an international public bidding for the Jian Ye Li project<sup>127</sup>. Portman Holdings was selected, and brought forward a design to carry out the rehabilitation and construction. It turned out that the foreign investor held more than half of the interests of the project, leaving the government-led Hengfu Ltd., which was in name the owner of the property right of Jian Ye Li, with only a relatively small portion of the interests (about 35%<sup>128</sup>). From this point on, it was more obvious that the rehabilitation project

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<sup>125</sup> "Shanghai Jianyeli Ju Min Lu Deyin De Xue Lei Kong Su," <http://www.canyu.org/n16381c6.aspx>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013.

<sup>126</sup> Lang Lin, "Portman Jianyeli Xiang Mu Xiao Shou Yu Zu Yu Pao Shou, Xuhui Xiang Guan Ji Gou Huo Hui Gou," *China Business News*, 14<sup>th</sup> September, (2012).

<sup>127</sup> Ruxiang Zhang, Wei Miu, "Shi Ku Men Lilong De Zai Sheng: Jianyeli Bao Hu Zheng Zhi Shi Dian Xiang Mu De She Ji," *Shanghai Construction Science & Technology*, No. 3, (2008): 6.

<sup>128</sup> *Hu Ban* "'Liang Lin Gu Ju' Bao Quan Yi Yi Yun, Portman Citibank Qi Qiao Cheng Wei Jianyeli 'Zhu Ren'", *National Business Daily*, 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2012, <http://www.nbd.com.cn/articles/2012-02-08/632379.html>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013).

of Jian Ye Li had been steered in a different direction, from a government-led preservation project to one more of a commercial real estate development. To a large degree this plan was forced into being by the high cost of preparation done before the renovation, but it excluded the original residents from moving back<sup>129</sup>.

After two years of discussion, the official plan that was approved kept the West Lane mostly intact with strict preservation methods<sup>130</sup>, but demolished the East and Middle Lanes and to rebuild them with added underground floors and other improved infrastructure<sup>131</sup>. In September 2008, the project was formally taken over from the Xufang Group to a Sino-foreign joint venture initiated by Portman Holdings, though the Hengfu Ltd still held a part of the interests in the venture. Today, Apollo Global Real Estate Management also now possesses

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<sup>129</sup> Siqing Min, *Cheng Shi Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Bao Hu Qu Kong Jian De Sheng Chan Ji Zhi Yan Jiu: Yi Shanghai Shi Hengshan Lu-Fuxing Lu Li Shi Wen Hua Feng Mao Bao Hu Qu Wei Li*, (Shanghai: East China Normal University, Master's Degree, 2007), 44.

<sup>130</sup> Hua Lin, "Preliminary Probe into Protective Repairs and Energy Saving Technologies of Historical Buildings: Take Protective Project of West Alley Jianyeli for Example," *Housing Science*, (November 2010): 44-45.

<sup>131</sup> Jiamin Yu, "Jianyeli Gai Zao Diao Cha," (*Zao Bao*, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2012, [http://house.ifeng.com/rollnews/detail\\_2012\\_02/13/12464440\\_0.shtml](http://house.ifeng.com/rollnews/detail_2012_02/13/12464440_0.shtml), last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013).

a large part of the stocks after it purchased some companies that held interests in this project in 2010.<sup>132</sup>



Figure 19: Partly Demolished, Partly Preserved Jian Ye Li in 2008. (Source: [http://club.pchome.net/topic\\_2\\_3\\_284538\\_1\\_.html](http://club.pchome.net/topic_2_3_284538_1_.html))

Most of the construction was completed by 2012. The East and Middle Lanes were rebuilt using new materials, such as reinforced concrete, and two underground floors were added. The project consisted of 51 commercial

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<sup>132</sup> Qiangling Yang, "Shanghai Jianyeli Zai Bao Yi Yun: Tu Di Wei Jing Zhao Pai Guai Yi Chu Rang," *National Business Daily*, 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2012, <http://business.sohu.com/20120210/n334273434.shtml>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013).



apartments for sale, and some storefronts along West Jian Guo Road same as before, although this time the shops will contain internationally-famous first-line brands<sup>133</sup> or antiques<sup>134</sup>. The West Lane was renovated with some of the old materials from the demolished Lilongs in the other two lanes, and will be available as 62 service apartments.<sup>135</sup> As to the rental, the daily rentals for the studios/suites or apartments/townhouses range from 1,350 RMB to 8,000 RMB (the lowest one of these daily charges can rent a bedroom for a month in some remote areas of Xuhui District), and the monthly rentals from 28,000 RMB to 60,000 RMB.<sup>136</sup> It appears that the investor was confident about Shanghai's real estate market and Jian Ye Li's value with its historic ambience, despite its lost authenticity and the relatively small rooms for luxurious

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<sup>133</sup> Pei Wang, Fuqin Teng, "Shang Ye Di Chang Hui Nuan 'Shi Ku Men Jing Ji' Qian Jing Kan Hao: Shi Ku Men Zong He Ti 'Jiangyeli' Nian Nei Zhong Zhuang Liang Xiang," *Xin Wen Wan Bao*, 17<sup>th</sup> March, (2010): A1, 17.

<sup>134</sup> Yewei Chen, "Urban Renewal and Cultural Heritage," *Modern Urban Research*, (December 2012): 38.

<sup>135</sup> "Portman Jianyeli, She Qu Chuang Xiang," <http://www.portmanhouse.com/zh/about-us/concept.html>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013.

<sup>136</sup> "Portman Jianyeli, Zu Jia," <http://www.portmanhouse.com/zh/rooms-a-rates/rates.html>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013.

housing<sup>137</sup>. On the official website of Jian Ye Li of Portman House, it was declared that a grand opening was to be expected in March, 2012.

### 3.3. Embarrassing Position Following Public Controversy

The demolition and reconstruction of the designated Lilong did not go unnoticed by the public, however, even after being officially approved. Various forms of media have reported about the progress of the project and the treatment of the people in Jian Ye Li. Especially after its transition in ownership in 2008, more doubts arose.

The disputes mainly focus on three aspects. First, the transfer of its ownership in 2008 seemed to be lacking appropriate and transparent procedures because it did not go through the bid-inviting, listing and auction process<sup>138</sup>. According to the law, after August 2004 all land to be developed for business purposes must go through this three-step process. The

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<sup>137</sup> Pei Wang, Fuqin Teng, "Shang Ye Di Chang Hui Nuan 'Shi Ku Men Jing Ji' Qian Jing Kan Hao: Shi Ku Men Zong He Ti 'Jiangyeli' Nian Nei Zhong Zhuang Liang Xiang," *Xin Wen Wan Bao*, 17<sup>th</sup> March, (2010): A1, 17.

<sup>138</sup> Lingqiang Yang, "Shanghai Jianyeli Zai Bao Yi Yun: Tu Di Wei Jing Zhao Pai Guai Yi Chu Rang," *National Business Daily*, 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2012, <http://business.sohu.com/20120210/n334273434.shtml>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013).

government and developer (Portman mainly) might have seized the designation of Excellent Historic Architecture as an excuse to entitle the project as historic preservation, and to exclude it from common commercial developments.

The second controversy focused on Jian Ye Li's transformation from a lively traditional and ordinary Shanghai neighborhood to a luxurious residential community of apartments and townhouses. People from the area told reporters that the community today was no longer the Jian Ye Li which they used to know<sup>139</sup>. Shanghai's largest local television, Dragon TV, once said in a news program that the Jian Ye Li project preserved the appearance but lost the soul<sup>140</sup>.

Third, many voices criticized the demolition and reconstruction as a means to rehabilitate the Lilongs. It is not acceptable to tear down a designated building.

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<sup>139</sup> "Jianyeli Tang Zhe Zhong Qiang: Ni Chu Tong Le Shei," *Dong Di Chan*, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2012, <http://msn.finance.sina.com.cn/gdxw/20120222/1852712385.html>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013).

<sup>140</sup> "Shi Ku Men Bian Gao Ji Jiu Dian, Shanghai Jianyeli Gai Zao Re Zheng Yi," Dragon TV, 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2008, <http://tv.sohu.com/20080713/n258116831.shtml>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013).

Some even called the rebuilt East and Middle Lanes “fake”<sup>141</sup>, which brought the project the most shame, and potentially devalued the residences offered for sale. The drama was intensified when the heated debate on historic preservation, ignited by the demolition of a courtyard owned by famous historic figures Liang Sicheng and Lin Huiyin in Beijing, spread over the country. Jian Ye Li was occasionally referred to as the Shanghai version of the Liang and Lin’s former residence in Beijing, because both of them caused great controversies<sup>142</sup>. The public opinion in 2012 placed in shadow the planned grand opening and the commercial prospect of Jian Ye Li.

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<sup>141</sup> “Shanghai: Shi Ku Men Jian Zhu Zao Yu ‘Bao Hu Xing Po Huai’,” *Modern Property Management*, (April 2012): 7.

<sup>142</sup> An Wang, “Liang Lin Gu Ju,” *Za Wen Xuan Kan*, (March-Xia, 2012): 6.



Figure 20: Jian Ye Li, Its Opening Suspended. (Photo taken by author on Aug. 07, 2012)

As a result, the sale of the newly renovated Jian Ye Li was forced to a stop, without a clearly stated reason later that year. The examination and approval of both its sale and rental was somehow delayed<sup>143</sup> (Figure 20). Portman Holdings and Apollo Global Real Estate Management are now faced by the problem that sales are being delayed by the government, while they need the cash. There are now rumors that the investors are willing to transfer the whole

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<sup>143</sup> Lang Lin, "Portman Jianyeli Xiang Mu Xiao Shou Yu Zu Yu Pao Shou, Xuhui Xiang Guan Ji Gou Huo Hui Gou," *China Business News*, 14<sup>th</sup> September, (2012).

project to others. According to some reporters, Xufang Group might consider buying back the stock from the combined investors headed by Portman Holdings<sup>144</sup>. Now, the fate of the new Jian Ye Li is still in suspension.

### 3.4. Conclusion

The project of Jian Ye Li is one of the most controversial ones in recent years. From the developer and the district government's perspective, the title of "designated" site was the reason for putting much effort into the rebuilding of the East and Middle Lanes. These efforts were not appreciated by the public; on the contrary, the rebuilt lanes were criticized as "fake". This indicates the general public's increasing awareness of the need for Lilong preservation. Nevertheless, if Jian Ye Li was not designated, it could be just another demolished Lilong neighborhood replaced by new construction of high-rise apartment housing and could possibly go unnoticed. Here the official designation exerts a very strong influence, but does it mean undesignated sites do not deserve preservation or the appropriate preservation treatment?

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<sup>144</sup> Lingqiang Yang, "Shanghai Jianyeli Zai Bao Yi Yun: Tu Di Wei Jing Zhao Pai Guai Yi Chu Rang," *National Business Daily*, 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2012, <http://business.sohu.com/20120210/n334273434.shtml>, last accessed on Mar. 29, 2013).

## CHAPTER 4. JING AN BIE SHU: NOT YET ANOTHER TIAN ZI FANG

### 4.0. Introduction

Jing An Bie Shu (静安别墅), the case discussed in this chapter, is an example of some designated New Type Lilongs which were relatively stable in condition and lucky enough to have not been under much pressure of commercial redevelopment. In Jing An Bie Shu some transformations in the form of home business happened in recent years. The discussion here shows different attitudes towards these transformations from parties including the original residents, the local government, the shop owners, and the consumers at those shops. At the time this thesis is being written, the government's decision to clear out recent businesses seems to be the most powerful.

### 4.1. Middle Class Style in the City Center

Jing An Bie Shu is located at today's Lane 1025 West Nanjing Road. In 1926 the celebrated Zhang family from nearby Nanxun Village of Zhejiang Province bought this piece of land covering 2.25 hectares<sup>145</sup>. The construction of the

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<sup>145</sup> Zhen Xi, "Bao Liu Hai Pai Sheng Huo Feng Wei De Jing An Bie Shu," *Laodong Daily*, 19<sup>th</sup> September, (2010): A8.

residential community Jing An Bie Shu started in 1928<sup>146</sup> and was finished four years later. It remains the largest New Type Lilong community in Shanghai<sup>147</sup> (Figure 21).

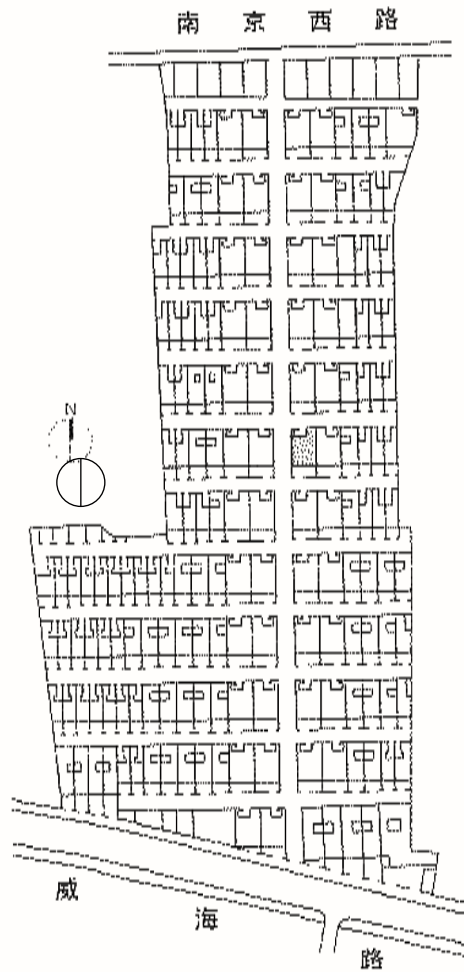


Figure 21: Site Plan of Jing An Bie Shu. (Source: *The Shanghai Housing After Its Opening to Foreigners*, 58)

<sup>146</sup> Wei Cao, *The Shanghai Housing After Its Opening to Foreigners*, (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 2004), 57.

<sup>147</sup> Song Huang, "Constructing the Media Industry in Urban Cultural Space: with the Cultural Media Street of Weihai Road in Jing'an District as an Example," *Tongji University Journal Social Science Section*, Vol. 22, No. 3, (June 2011): 64.



Different from the earlier two examples of Shi Ku Men Lilong, Jing An Bie Shu does not have the Shi Ku Men feature. Instead, the front gate and enclosing walls of each of its units were much lower to create openness and to allow gardening and greenness in the front yards<sup>148</sup>. The lanes are wider to allow automobiles to pass through and some space was reserved in the buildings for parking<sup>149</sup>. Its interior facilities could be described as complete, as they meet the housing standards of the early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century.

Of course, these more advanced modern designs and facilities were in accordance with the wishes and needs of the original target customers and the central location surrounded by various venues for more or less higher-level consumers. In addition, a few large theaters, and several famous night clubs were situated nearby. Because of its superior location within the Public Concession (the former British Concession), the rent of Jian An Bie Shu was much higher than, or even as twice as high as other New Type Lilong housing in the concession area, although this was still not as steep as the garden

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<sup>148</sup> Luyao Cheng, "Ju Zhu Qu Huan Jing Jing Guan Wen Hua Ge Xing De Su Zao: Yi Lao Shanghai Jian Zhu Jing An Bie Shu Wei Li," *Business*, (November 2010): 57.

<sup>149</sup> Shaozhou Wang, Zhimin Chen, *Li Long Jian Zhu*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Scientific and Technical Publishers, 1987), 167.

houses and entirely modern apartments. Some even said that the rent was paid by gold bars, yet the renters came in continuous stream.<sup>150</sup>

Among its original residents were bankers, lawyers, doctors, and shopkeepers. In the units along the two main streets (West Nanjing Road to the north and Weihai Road to the south) there were some storefronts, three of which, namely Indian Jewelry, Siberian Leathers, and Kaisiling Café, were mentioned in the famous novels by Eileen Chang (or Ailing Zhang)<sup>151</sup>. The author was a member of a famous family, whose works are widely viewed as a representative of the culture of modern Shanghai during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 4.2. Quietly Regaining Attractiveness

After the 1950s, like most other Lilongs, Jing An Bie Shu went through a series of changes in its physical condition and in the composition of its residents. In general, the condition in Jing An Bie Shu was not as deteriorated as most of the old type Shi Ku Men Lilongs. Although it also suffered from problems like

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<sup>150</sup> Zhen Xi, "Bao Liu Hai Pai Sheng Huo Feng Wei De Jing An Bie Shu," *Laodong Daily*, 19<sup>th</sup> September, (2010): A8.

<sup>151</sup> Naishan Cheng, "Read Nanjing West Road from Zhang Ailing's 'Lust, Caution'," *Architecture & Culture*, Vol. 30, No. 8, (2006): 101.

crowdedness, its relatively ample living space gave the residents some measure of comfort. In 1994 Jing An Bie Shu was listed in the second group of Shanghai Excellent Historic Architecture, together with Jian Ye Li and 174 other buildings<sup>152</sup>, but it was designated into a Level 3 group<sup>153</sup>, a higher level than Jian Ye Li. The preservation regulations for Level 3 Excellent Historic Architecture require that neither of the building's exterior nor structural system could be altered, but changes to the interior are allowed. In 2005 Jing An Bie Shu was included in the West Nanjing Road Historic Cultural Area of Shanghai and was officially confirmed to be in the core preservation district of this designated area<sup>154</sup>.

After the 80s, West Nanjing Road regained its prosperity as one of the city's biggest commercial centers. Therefore Jing An Bie Shu, in combination with other Lilong communities around it, seemed like a quiet historical residential

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<sup>152</sup> *Shanghai Shi Di Er Pi You Xiu Li Shi Jian Zhu Ming Dan*, [http://www.shgtj.gov.cn/bxzc/zsc/lsfm/200905/t20090521\\_301677.htm](http://www.shgtj.gov.cn/bxzc/zsc/lsfm/200905/t20090521_301677.htm), last accessed on Mar. 30, 2013.

<sup>153</sup> *Er: Bao Hu Deng Ji*, <http://www.shtong.gov.cn/node2/node2245/node64514/node64528/node64533/userobject1ai58394.html>, last accessed on Mar. 30, 2013.

<sup>154</sup> Mu Qing, Leilei Huang, "Jing An Bie Shu, Shi Jing Yu Wen Yi De Hun Da," *Life Weekly*, No.1344, 14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> December, (2012).

neighborhood of Shanghai within the busy downtown shopping area. Although somewhat hidden from the shopping malls in high-rise buildings and away from the crowds on the main streets, its special ambience with the nostalgic architectural style still attracted a few perceptive young people.

In 2007, several middle class working people between the ages of 20 and 40 opened their stores in Jing An Bie Shu<sup>155</sup>. Most of them did not view their stores as major investment opportunities, but rather as a hobby or a relaxing place to invite friends regularly. Many of these young entrepreneurs do not have the budget to advertise outside of the neighborhood, except for setting up “groups” or “events” on websites like Douban<sup>156</sup>. They often have other real jobs to make a living, although there are also a few couples who resigned from their “proper” jobs to focus on their small businesses, either because they prefer the lifestyle here or because the business has been going well<sup>157</sup>.

Among the stores, a majority are cafés. The others include a tea house, small

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<sup>155</sup> Mu Qing, Leilei Huang, “Jing An Bie Shu, Shi Jing Yu Wen Yi De Hun Da,” *Life Weekly*, No.1344, 14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> December, (2012).

<sup>156</sup> Jia Qiu, “Jing An Bie Shu 2010,” *China Business Network Weekly*, 7<sup>th</sup> December, (2010).

<sup>157</sup> “Jing An Bie Shu: Zai Xi Shi Tian Jing Li He Ka Fei,” *Lohasmetro*, 6<sup>th</sup> October, (2009), <http://2010.qq.com/a/20091006/000040.htm>, last accessed on Mar. 30, 2013.

gallery, gift shops, and a traditional artifact store (Figure 22). However, there are no large galleries or artists' studios like those in the factory buildings of Tian Zi Fang.



Figure 22: Businesses in Jing An Bie Shu. (Photos taken by author on Aug. 07, 2012)

Before these trendy shops and cafés began to appear, earlier stores provided a range of customer services. The residents in Jing An Bie Shu already had a barber shop, a laundry, a shoe repair shop, and a breakfast booth. Most of them (around 5) obtained their business licenses in the 1990s. The new

stores, however, do not own business licenses since the regulations have been revised so the property of Jing An Bie Shu is limited to “residential” uses. No business license has been chartered to Jing An Bie Shu in the last 10 years<sup>158</sup>, even though some owners of the new stores applied for one<sup>159</sup>. Strictly speaking the new stores are illegal. Nevertheless, those stores did not seem to have much trouble with their illegal status during the first few years as they were relatively few in number, which means the floor area of the commercial service in this community was probably within the government-suggested 3%-4%<sup>160</sup>.

In the late 2009 and early 2010, the Jing An Real Estate Group (静安置业), under the government of Jing An District, carried out a renovation project for Jing An Bie Shu with about 40 million RMB<sup>161</sup>, as part of the overall development of the area. The project was directed under the principle of

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<sup>158</sup> Yuqing Huang, “85 Hu Wu Zheng Wu Zhao Jing Ying Hu Jiang Zheng Zhi, Jing An Bie Shu Ming Que Ju Zhu Xing Zhi,” *Laodong Daily*, 26<sup>th</sup> November, (2011): 03.

<sup>159</sup> Jiawen Wu, Baoxiu Hu, Di Xu, “Si Wa Nai Cha: Ying Ye Zhi Zhao Cheng Le ‘Xin Bing’,” *Dong Fang Daily*, 26<sup>th</sup> November, (2011).

<sup>160</sup> Jiu Qu Zhu Zhai Gai Zao Zhong De Shang Ye Fu Wu She Shi, <http://www.shtong.gov.cn/node2/node2245/node75091/node75099/node75155/node75165/userobject1ai90927.html>, last accessed on May 1, 2013.

<sup>161</sup> Jia Qiu, “Jing An Bie Shu 2010,” *China Business Network Weekly*, 7<sup>th</sup> December, (2010).

“restore the old as old”. It included the restoration of the exterior walls and some improvements of the interior facilities. With its new renovation, the extremely central location, and the relatively comfortable amount of space, Jing An Bie Shu has been drawing some new residents who had never lived in a Lilong before, including some foreigners.

More stores were opened after the renovation. According to the owner of the gift store Hypo, there were three or four shops opened for business on the same day. However, the rent also started climbing. Li and Sun, who already owned two fragrance stores in Tian Zi Fang and Xin Tian Di, wanted to open another “quieter” branch in Jing An Bie Shu, but discovered that the rent had doubled in the time of half a year, though it still seemed fair compared to the rent in Tian Zi Fang.<sup>162</sup> In fact many people compared Jing An Bie Shu to the Tian Zi Fang five or six years ago<sup>163</sup>, when it just started to receive greater popularity and attention. For other less-established shop owners, the pressure of the increasing rent was obvious. Since many stores do not generate large

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<sup>162</sup> Jia Qiu, “Jing An Bie Shu 2010,” *China Business Network Weekly*, 7<sup>th</sup> December, (2010).

<sup>163</sup> Minwu Zhu, “Jing An Bie Shu Shang Pu Qu Liu Zhi Zheng, Qian Chu Te Se Min Ju Bao Hu Wen Ti,” *Jiefang Daily*, 16<sup>th</sup> January, (2012).

incomes, there is a limit to what they can afford. Some of them told journalists that they would have to move to other locations if the rent continues to rise<sup>164</sup>.

By the end of 2010, according to the Maobei Neighborhood Committee, there were more than 70 storefronts<sup>165</sup> on the first floor of the 183 units in Jing An Bie Shu<sup>166</sup>, including both the old daily service stores and the newer trendy ones. Besides the dominating cafés and other small shops, a few bars and studios opened in Jing An Bie Shu.

#### 4.3. Ban from the Government: Part or All?

Issues similar to those seen in Tian Zi Fang arose in Jing An Bie Shu. More cars and trucks from outside entered the Lilong for the convenience of businesses to carry goods. The cars often took up much space, blocked the lanes, and became a fire hazard<sup>167</sup>. Even though the lanes in Jing An Bie Shu are wider than that of most other old type Lilongs, the neighborhood was not

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<sup>164</sup> Mu Qing, Leilei Huang, "Jing An Bie Shu, Shi Jing Yu Wen Yi De Hun Da," *Life Weekly*, No.1344, 14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> December, (2012).

<sup>165</sup> Jia Qiu, "Jing An Bie Shu 2010," *China Business Network Weekly*, 7<sup>th</sup> December, (2010).

<sup>166</sup> Wei Cao, *The Shanghai Housing After Its Opening to Foreigners*, (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 2004), 57.

<sup>167</sup> Baoxiu Hu, Jiawen Wu, Meng Li, "Jing An Bie Shu Huo Jiang Qing Li 'Hei Hu' Shang Pu," *Dong Fang Daily*, 23<sup>rd</sup> November, (2011).



designed for regular long-time parking with cars passing through at the same time.

In addition, an increasing number of residents were bothered by the operations of the businesses. Complaints to the residents' committee of Jing An Bie Shu have been increasing ever since the commercial activities boomed<sup>168</sup>. For example, a catering business opens early but closes late, many elder residents could not sleep with the noise of preparing food and cleaning. Also, some businesses needed to operate big and noisy equipment.

The residents did not find all of the shops and stores objectionable. Most local people made it clear that the old daily service businesses were very helpful to them and should be welcomed. Some residents even approved of the quiet trendy shops and studios opened by young people, even though they never purchased goods or services themselves<sup>169</sup>. Many of the cafés only served drinks, pasta or other simple food, instead of commonly-seen Chinese food,

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<sup>168</sup> Xianzhen Zhang, Yuqing Huang, "Jing An Bie Shu Shang Pu Wei Jie Chai Qian Tong Zhi, Gong Shang Cheng Bu Hui Cai Qu Guo Ji Shou Duan," *Dong Fang Wang*, 24<sup>th</sup> November, (2011), <http://ld.eastday.com/l/20111124/u1a940769.html>, last accessed on Mar. 30, 2013).

<sup>169</sup> Ye Zhi, Yucheng He, Zhi Li, "Jing An Bie Shu Zhe Ci You Yao Zen Me Ban?" *Shen Bao*, 7<sup>th</sup> December, (2011).

which often takes much more work and time in preparing, making a lot of noise and creating more waste products and smell. Formerly, a very small restaurant served Chinese food like this, which annoyed many of the residents in Jing An Bie Shu<sup>170</sup>.

As a result of the accumulated complaints from the residents, the Department of Industry and Commerce of Jing An District decided to clear out those businesses that did not hold a legal license. Through 2011 and continuing into 2012 the government implemented a series of actions, including forbidding the cars of those businesses from entering the Lilong. More regular patrols policed the area<sup>171</sup>. The clearing-out, however, was carried out regardless of the different types of business. It was targeted at all the stores without licenses, whose number reached nearly 100 in total in 2011<sup>172</sup>.

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<sup>170</sup> Ge Chen, Di Zhu, "Jing An Bie Shu, You Tian You Di, E Lie Huan Jing Rang Ju Min Bao Yuan Xiao Qu Li Kai Le 80 Duo Jia Dian Pu Qie Duo Shu Wu Zheng," *Youth Daily*, 30<sup>th</sup> November, (2010): A04.

<sup>171</sup> Tong Kong, "Jing An Bie Shu Jiang Zai Xian Yuan Sheng Tai Hai Pai Feng Qing," *Jiefang Daily*, 1<sup>st</sup> July, (2009).

<sup>172</sup> Yuqing Huang, "85 Hu Wu Zheng Wu Zhao Jing Ying Hu Jiang Zheng Zhi, Jing An Bie Shu Ming Que Ju Zhu Xing Zhi," *Laodong Daily*, 26<sup>th</sup> November, (2011): 03.

As a counter-measurement, the stores formed alliances. As soon as the person in the store at the outermost of the neighborhood sees an officer coming, he or she notifies other stores, so they could pack up their signage and close their shops temporarily to avoid inspection<sup>173</sup>. Certainly this was not an appropriate solution. As the government tightened its inspection and increased the times of patrolling, many stores had to close for a relatively long period of time. In many cases, the government was trying to persuade the shop owners to give up their businesses without using more forceful methods<sup>174</sup>. Given these circumstances the number of stores was slowly reduced.

Because it is difficult for the government to control the transference of the apartments and the landlords can rent out their apartments to any one, there are still possibilities that new stores will be opened. The government of Jing An District seems determined to clear out the non-licensed stores however, by joint efforts from government departments in addition to the police. The

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<sup>173</sup> Ye Zhi, Yucheng He, Zhi Li, "Jing An Bie Shu Zhe Ci You Yao Zen Me Ban?" *Shen Bao*, 7<sup>th</sup> December, (2011).

<sup>174</sup> Yanting Lu, Qing Lu, "Zheng Zhi 1 Xiao Shi Hou, Jing An Bie Shu Xiao Dian Chong Kai," *Laodong Daily*, 12<sup>th</sup> April, (2012): 05.

government claimed that it will put the residents' interests in first place, and will not let Jing An Bie Shu take the path of Tian Zi Fang. The property of Jing An Bie Shu is meant to be residential, as it was stated by the government.<sup>175</sup>

Soon conflicts arose in public. Fierce debates surfaced among people in the media. The supporters of the shops from outside of the neighborhood, some of whom worked nearby, were somewhat disappointed about the closing of some of their favorite places to hang out. The residents, on the contrary, were relieved to see some of the most troubling stores closed, even temporarily. A middle-aged woman said that the first thing she did after learning that the catering business stopped was to hang up her futon, as there was no smoke in the air<sup>176</sup>. Also, many people asked if there can be more flexible policies as to which kinds of business should be closed and which can be kept.

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<sup>175</sup> Xin Liu, "Gong Shang Ding Xing Jing An Bie Shu Shang Hu Fei Fa Jing Ying, Bu Zou 'Tianzifang' Lu Xian," *Dong Fang Wang*, 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2011, <http://sh.eastday.com/qtmt/20111125/u1a941214.html>, last accessed on Mar. 30, 2013).

<sup>176</sup> Jiawen Wu, Baoxiu Hu, Di Xu, "Xiao Qu Ju Min: Lao Ren Zheng Wan Shui Bu Zhao," *Dong Fang Daily*, 26<sup>th</sup> December, (2011).



Figure 23: East Side of the Jing An Bie Shu and the Construction Site of Subway. (Photo taken by author on Aug. 6, 2012)

The government, on the other hand, considers Jing An Bie Shu to be an almost pure residential district with fine historic feature, or a “scenic area”, within its overall plan of the whole Wei Hai Road area’s development<sup>177</sup>. Most other undesignated Lilongs directly surrounding Jing An Bie Shu were demolished around 2009 to make way for the construction of the new subway lines (Figure 23). Also, Weihai Road, bordering the south of the neighborhood,

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<sup>177</sup> Zhiping Li, Xin Liu, “Wen Hua Chuan Mei Jie: Shanghai Zhuan Ye Jie Jian She De Xin Tu Po,” *Scientific Development*, No.7, (2009): 98-99.

is reported to be built into the “Madison Avenue” of the East<sup>178</sup> in the future.

Almost certainly the character of Jing An Bie Shu will be affected, along with another designated Lilong called Zhang Garden to the east of Jing An Bie Shu, across North Mao Ming Road<sup>179</sup>.

#### 4.4. Conclusion

In this case, besides the distinguished history and location, the tension between some spontaneous transformations from residences into businesses and the government has been intriguing. The government has not intended to help optimize the transformation and it does not wish to authorize the recent stores legal status, because of the community’s residential character and the residents’ interests. At the same time, the overall planning of the area is destined to change some of the important characteristics of Jing An Bie Shu. With a new subway station being built next to it, it’s becoming harder and harder to keep it as a quiet neighborhood within the city center.

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<sup>178</sup> “Wei Hai Lu Yu Bian Shen ‘Mai Di Xun Da Dao’ Lao Jian Zhu Xiu Shan Yu Kai Fa Tong Bu,” <http://usa.bytravel.cn/art/whl/whlybsmdxddlzxsykftb/>, last accessed on Mar. 30, 2013.

<sup>179</sup> Yanping Fan, “Wei Hai Lu Wen Hua Chuan Mei Jie Kai Fa Gong Cheng Qi Dong, Zhang Jia Hua Yuan Jing An Bie Shu Jiang Bao Liu Yuan Sheng Tai,” *Youth Daily*, 16<sup>th</sup> April, (2008): A19.

## CHAPTER 5. BU GAO LI: “THE TOILET PROJECT”

### 5.0. Introduction

This chapter takes Bu Gao Li (步高里) as an example of the Lilong neighborhoods designated as Historical and Cultural Sites within the national heritage system. Demolition is strictly prohibited in this case. Despite extremely crowded and inconvenient conditions, in this neighborhood there had not been many chances for the residents to move out. The renovation projects undertaken by the government only offered slight improvements, and the most recent one, targeted particularly at the infrastructure, was called by many “The Toilet Project”. At the same time, some new residents have been trying to make changes, but found it difficult to truly succeed by their own efforts.

### 5.1. Crowded Chinese-style Lilong

A new type Shi Ku Men Lilong, Bu Gao Li, is situated at Lane 287 Shaanxi South Road (Figure 24). It is on the north side of Jianguo West Road, and only one block west of the Tian Zi Fang Lilong and four blocks east of the Jian

Ye Li Lilong. Bu Gao Li was within the boundary of the French Concession after its third expansion, in the same fashion as the other two Lilongs. It is also worth noting that Jian Ye Li and Bu Gao Li were developed and built by the same French Corporation, Fonciere et Immobiliere de Chine. According to Zhu Donghai and Zhu Xiaoming, it is very possible that they were even designed by the same architect, F. Chollot. Moreover<sup>180</sup>, Bu Gao Li was believed to be built in 1930<sup>181</sup>, the same year when the East and Middle Lanes of Jian Ye Li were completed.

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<sup>180</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, "Two Lanes in Shanghai – Textual Study on the Relation between Bugao Lane and Jianye Lane," *Housing Science*, (December 2010): 40.

<sup>181</sup> Yanning Li, Yongyi Lu, "Wan Qi Shi Ku Men Lilong – Bu Gao Li," *Shanghai Urban Planning Review*, (March 2005): 36.



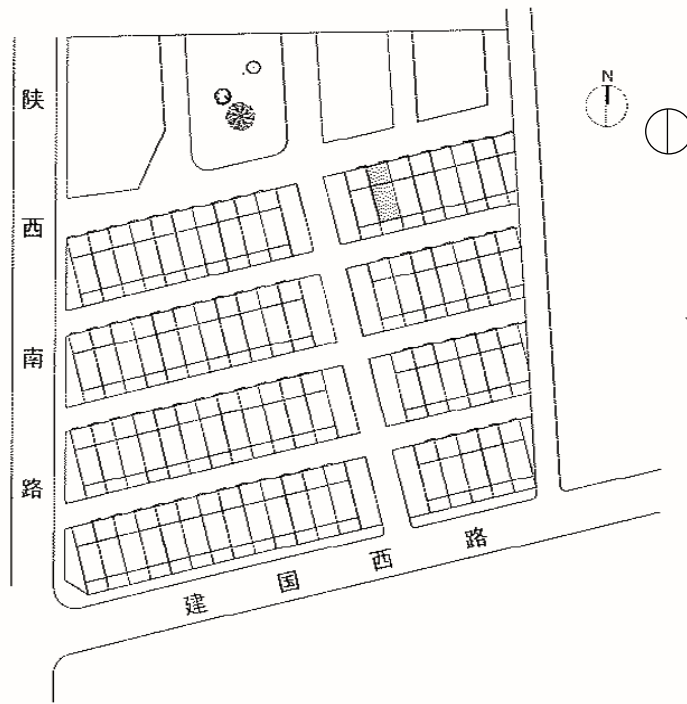


Figure 24: Site Plan of Bu Gao Li. (Source: *The Shanghai Housing After Its Opening to Foreigners*, 76)

Considering the above factors, it is not surprising at all that Bu Gao Li and Jian Ye Li have very similar housing types and unit plans. Smaller in area and scale, Bu Gao Li has bigger units than the Middle and East Lanes of Jian Ye Li, with a higher density and plot ratio. Its unit plan is almost the same as that of the West Lane of Jian Ye Li.<sup>182</sup> The developer probably used the same designs with a few alterations on the projects of Jian Ye Li and Bu Gao Li, which would certainly save costs.

<sup>182</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, "Two Lanes in Shanghai – Textual Study on the Relation between Bugao Lane and Jianye Lane," *Housing Science*, (December 2010): 40.

Bu Gao Li was developed specifically to accommodate Chinese people, probably because it was closer to the boundary of the French Concession than facing the former Chinese Town, where many Chinese people resided. Its target customers were common working- to middle-class Chinese. As a result, the lanes in Bu Gao Li are relatively narrow, and were not designed to allow automobile transportation.

In the original design each unit belonged to a single family or household. The “second landlord” phenomena, which represented people subletting apartments to make a profit on the gap price, was already popular at the time of Bu Gao Li’s completion. The developer even noted in its advertisement that the units in Bu Gao Li had the potential to be divided into multiple apartments<sup>183</sup>. Bu Gao Li seems to have been crowded ever since its opening.

Probably because its target group of customers was Chinese, Bu Gao Li was specially designed with several traditional Chinese style decorated gateways, or Pailou, each at one of its main entrance from the outside streets. On the

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<sup>183</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, *Cite Bourgogne: A Historical Picture of Living Space in Shanghai Old Alley*, (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 2012), 38-39.

Pailous are marked the year “1930” and the neighborhood’s French name “Cité Bourgogne”. The gateways incorporate Western style arches under traditional Chinese decorations. Many Western decorations are also used inside the Lilong. Traditional Chinese gable walls, like those in the West Lane of Jian Ye Li, were originally used in Bu Gao Li, but were changed to normal gable walls for safety reasons in the late 1900s<sup>184</sup>.

The plan of Bu Gao Li also has a small public square in the north of the neighborhood, with a water well added later in the south-west corner<sup>185</sup>. Around it various types of stores selling eye glasses, bread, and clothing are obvious. There are also workshops and even a few small factories<sup>186</sup>. The Lilong units surrounding the square were designed to adapt to the commercial and residential needs on different floors.

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<sup>184</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, *Cite Bourgogne: A Historical Picture of Living Space in Shanghai Old Alley*, (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 2012), 43-44.

<sup>185</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, *Cite Bourgogne: A Historical Picture of Living Space in Shanghai Old Alley*, (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 2012), 29.

<sup>186</sup> Yanning Li, Yongyi Lu, “Wan Qi Shi Ku Men Lilong – Bu Gao Li,” *Shanghai Urban Planning Review*, (March 2005): 37-38.

Thanks to all of the above unique architectural features, Bu Gao Li was put on the list of the fifth group of Historical and Cultural Sites at the Municipal Level of Shanghai in 1989<sup>187</sup>. This designation is within the state administrative system of cultural heritage, which includes several different levels of designations as introduced earlier. Bu Gao Li, as a designated Historical and Cultural Site, is under the supervision of Municipal Administration of Cultural Heritage (上海市文物局), which was called Shanghai Administrative Committee of Cultural Heritage before September 2010<sup>188</sup>. It is also cross-listed as an Excellent Historic Architecture of Shanghai, classified as Level 3 Architecture<sup>189</sup>.

Therefore Bu Gao Li is protected more strictly by the regulations than the earlier three sites, which are all managed by the district level Housing and

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<sup>187</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, "Large City Event: The Evolution of Zhang Yuejuan's Life Space in Bugao Li Shanghai," *Huazhong Architecture*, (January 2010): 126.

<sup>188</sup> "Shanghai Shi Wen Wu Ju Gua Pai lü Xing Quan Shi Wen Wu Bao Hu Guan Li Zhi Neng," <http://www.sach.gov.cn/tabid/297/InfoID/25959/Default.aspx>, last accessed on Mar. 30, 2013.

<sup>189</sup> "Er: Bao Hu Deng Ji," <http://www.shtong.gov.cn/node2/node2245/node64514/node64528/node64533/userobject1ai58394.html>, last accessed on Mar. 30, 2013.

Land Administration Bureaus (房地局)<sup>190</sup>. The designation of Bu Gao Li ensured that its exterior could not be changed. In addition, like Jian Ye Li, it is within the boundary of the Hengshan Road-Fuxing Road Historic Cultural Area of Shanghai.

However, the building condition of Bu Gao Li may have been worse than other housing because of its limited space. During the Second Sino-Japanese War, many Chinese people poured into the concession to seek some sort of protection, and for that reason many of Bu Gao Li's long-time residents, some of whom remain there today, moved into the neighborhood with their families when they were very young<sup>191</sup>. A resident recalled that back then as many as 8 people lived in a room 7 square meters large<sup>192</sup>. This was not an uncommon thing in a Lilong for working class people within a concession at that time.

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<sup>190</sup> Tian Zi Fang is located in the Luwan District, same as Bu Gao Li, Jian Ye Li is in the Xuhui District, while Jing An Bie Shu is in the Jing'an District.

<sup>191</sup> Yajun He, "Tan Xun Bu Gao Li Gu Shi, Zou Jin Shi Ku Men Sheng Huo," *Rui Jin Shanghai Community News*, 5<sup>th</sup> December, (2012): 04/05.

<sup>192</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, "Large City Event: The Evolution of Zhang Yuejuan's Life Space in Bugao Li Shanghai," *Huazhong Architecture*, (January 2010): 126.

## 5.2. Struggle of the Community as a Historical and Cultural Site

After the government took over the ownership of Bu Gao Li in the 1950s, some existing additions to the original structure were granted to be legitimate. As the residents married and their families grew bigger, more rooms were added to the original buildings with the government's help. As a result, before its designation, the units had been added to repeatedly over time to make more room for people to live in.

Because of the almost unbearable condition in Bu Gao Li, many residents moved out to better places after they had enough money to pay higher rent or buy a new apartment. The less well-off residents had to stay in the neighborhood and pinned their hope on the government to redevelop the area and relocate them. However, the designation of Bu Gao Li as a protected Historical and Cultural Site theoretically excluded the possibility of redevelopment and relocation completely.<sup>193</sup> In terms of living conditions, Bu

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<sup>193</sup> Yajun He, "Tan Xun Bu Gao Li Gu Shi, Zou Jin Shi Ku Men Sheng Huo," *Rui Jin Shanghai Community News*, 5<sup>th</sup> December, (2012): 04/05.

Gao Li has been below the housing standards for a very long time and it is the residents who suffer the most.

After the designation, a few “restoration” efforts were begun by the government. The first projects were all aimed at the renovation of the exterior, repainting the exterior walls, for example <sup>194</sup>. There were very little improvements in the living facilities. In 1998 the Welfare House Allocation system was cancelled, which means the government is no longer responsible to offer people alternative housing at extremely low prices and common people have to buy commercial residences from the real estate market<sup>195</sup>. It seemed that for those with little fortune, the only chance remained to move out was eliminated. Consequently, only poor people were staying in the neighborhood and the condition increasingly worsened.

After several repainting projects, the details of the exterior walls of Bu Gao Li were all covered up by new paints. Yet as the understanding of preservation

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<sup>194</sup> Xu Hu, Yu Li, “Shanghai Long Tang: Chu Le Huai Jiu Hai Neng Zuo Dao Geng Duo,” *Chinese Social Science Today*, Vol. 20, No. 7, (2012).

<sup>195</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, “Large City Event: The Evolution of Zhang Yuejuan’s Life Space in Bugao Li Shanghai,” *Huazhong Architecture*, (January 2010): 129.

advanced in recent years, the government realized that repainting the exterior anew was not the best way to preserve the authenticity and original texture of the buildings. Also, the issue of the residents' living conditions in many old Lilongs was brought to the table by many scholars and activists.

Starting in 2007, a renovation project, called by many "the toilet project", was carried out in Bu Gao Li<sup>196</sup>. It was part of a larger project to be implemented in many Lilong neighborhoods to improve the sanitation, which was among the residents' biggest problems. A new type of patent toilet specifically designed for Lilong housing was introduced to and installed in each household<sup>197</sup>. Some flooring, stove and gas pipe implementation, and pavement restoration was also done<sup>198</sup>.

At the same time, the exterior walls were cleaned with great care, removing the many layers of paint so that the original surface of the walls could be seen,

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<sup>196</sup> "Lu Wan Qu 'Bu Gao Li' Deng Jiu Shi Zhu Zhai Xiao Qu Chu Wei Gai Zao Gong Cheng Xiang Mu Zhao Biao Gong Gao," <http://www.1128.org/html/scyx/sczx/cg/2007/04/doc31847.shtml>, last accessed on Mar. 30, 2013.

<sup>197</sup> Xiaoming Zhu, Xiaoying Gu, "Evaluation and Analysis on Four Kinds of Cases Concerning Protection and Renovation of Shikumen Lane in Shanghai," *Housing Science*, (June 2010): 28.

<sup>198</sup> Feng Sheng, Xiao Liu, Li Zhou, "80 Sui Bu Gao Li: Yuan Sheng Tai Shi Ku Men Sheng Huo," *Shanghai Morning Post*, 24<sup>th</sup> August, (2010): A23.



and the cleavages in the walls were patched. The cleaning project applied solutions imported from Germany and some officers also visited the Forbidden City and learned from the renovation experience of its exterior walls. The project cost around 7 million RMB in total, of which 1 million was granted by the Shanghai Municipal Administration of Cultural Heritage, and each household contributed one hundred Yuan. The rest was paid off by the government of Luwan District.<sup>199</sup>

The preservation of Bu Gao Li did not involve much controversy because it is a designated Historical and Cultural Site and not much change occurred. The “toilet project” seemed to be working better than the previous sanitation system. Nevertheless, judging from the accounts of the residents, the “toilet” advancement is not enough to truly improve their living condition and to relieve the pressure on the buildings. The space is still extremely crowded (Figure

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<sup>199</sup> Liping Yao, “Ji Zhe Tan Fang Gai Zao Hou Bu Gao Li Lao Fang Zi Ru He Bian Cheng ‘Huo Wen Wu’,” *Xin Min Wan Bao*, 13<sup>th</sup> June, (2008).

25). One resident said she had to give up a closet and rearrange the furniture in her room to fit in the new toilet<sup>200</sup>.



Figure 25: Inside Bu Gao Li Today. (Source: “*Tan Xun Bu Gao Li Gu Shi, Zou Jin Shi Ku Men Sheng Huo*”, *Rui Jin Shanghai Community News*, 05, 12, 2012: 04/05)

The residents in general are still not satisfied with the current living conditions and deeply desire better housing. Some are still eager to move even at the cost of relocation, although they treasure the good location and close relationships with their neighbors in Bu Gao Li<sup>201</sup>. Relocation is no longer a choice for the residents in Bu Gao Li, unless they rent out their house and make more money in another job, so that they can afford a new apartment.

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<sup>200</sup> Feng Sheng, Xiao Liu, Li Zhou, “80 Sui Bu Gao Li: Yuan Sheng Tai Shi Ku Men Sheng Huo,” *Shanghai Morning Post*, 24<sup>th</sup> August, (2010): A23.

<sup>201</sup> Xu Hu, Yu Li, “Shanghai Long Tang: Chu Le Huai Jiu Hai Neng Zuo Dao Geng Duo,” *Chinese Social Science Today*, Vol. 20, No. 7, (2012).

### 5.3. Renewing Residents and Spontaneous Efforts

With no dramatic relocation, the composition of the residents has been gradually going through a shuffle in recent years. After the younger generation of the original families moved out, only elders among the original residents remain in the neighborhood. The tiny apartments in Bu Gao Li are still being rented out to new-comers. Most of them are young laborers coming from rural areas who work in low-income occupations in Shanghai. They have nevertheless brought some vitality to the old community. According to the census data collected in 2009, people above the age of 60 amounts to half of the total population in Bu Gao Li, and residents with their household registration outside the neighborhood take up about 30% of the total<sup>202</sup>.

Other than the major trend in this shift, there are also some new comers who are exceptions. After the major preservation project, a few relatively well-off people were attracted to Bu Gao Li. In 2008 a lady who lived in a new residential community in Jing An District bought a large room in Bu Gao Li at a

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<sup>202</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, "Large City Event: The Evolution of Zhang Yuejuan's Life Space in Bugao Li Shanghai," *Huazhong Architecture*, (January 2010): 128.

price that very few Chinese were willing to pay, even after its preservation project. This lady used to live in a Lilong in her childhood and now wanted a place for her mom and herself to relax. She renovated the interior with her own money, even though the transference of the property rights was based on very vague provisions in the regulations. After two years of residence however, she moved out because of the lack of privacy, the noise from neighbors, and the poor sound-insulation. She rented out the room to the neighborhood community as a place to get together, since the room's interior had been renovated and was left in a nice condition compared to other apartments in Bu Gao Li.<sup>203</sup>

Among the new-comers there is also a young couple who transformed their small space into a loft. The husband is an expat of Scottish origin and South African nationality, who teaches English in Shanghai. The wife is an interior designer working in a nearby creative industry center<sup>204</sup>. They were initially attracted to Bu Gao Li by its romantic ambience within the former French

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<sup>203</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, *Cite Bourgogne: A Historical Picture of Living Space in Shanghai Old Alley*, (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 2012), 111-113.

<sup>204</sup> Donghai Zhu, Xiaoming Zhu, *Cite Bourgogne: A Historical Picture of Living Space in Shanghai Old Alley*, (Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press, 2012), 117-120.

Concession and its low rent. Soon after moving in however, this couple found the reality of Bu Gao Li far from dreamy. The sewerage is problematic; electricity is cut off often; rats are spotted sometimes; and the neighbors are loud in the lanes. Despite a huge disappointment, they have to put up with the situation since both of them have just started working and are not yet well-established financially. They are planning to move out after they have enough savings to actually purchase an apartment with better environment. Judging from the above cases it also becomes obvious that many of the new residents are not in any close relationship with their neighbors, at least not like the original residents, a large number of whom were relatives. The residents today are from much different walks of life and are in Bu Gao Li for very different reasons.

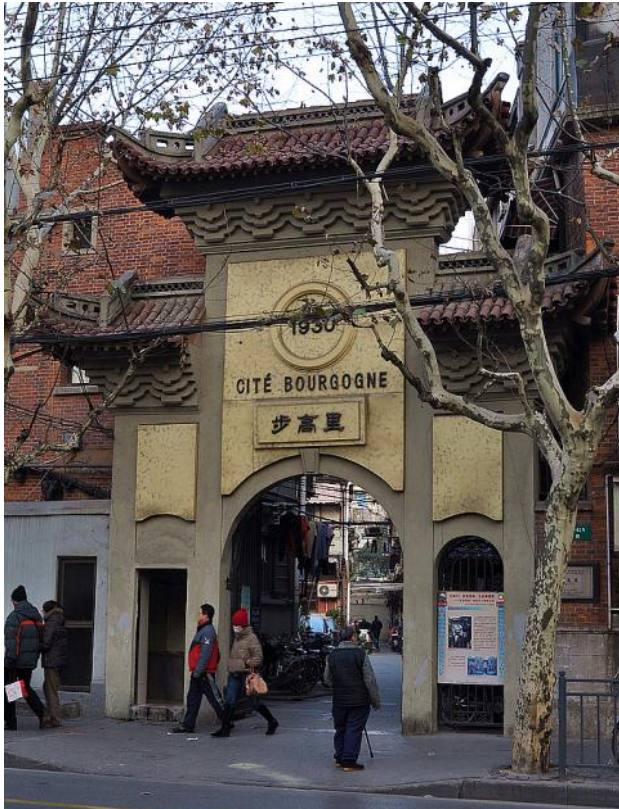


Figure 26: Bu Gao Li Today. (Source: <http://forum.xitek.com/forum-viewthread-tid-1065605-extra--action-printable-page-3.html>)

It seems that the most recent preservation project only improved a part of the facilities and has not fixed the fundamental problems. Other than the inferior infrastructure, crowdedness is still serious in most apartments of Bu Gao Li. The government is aware of the problem and has the idea of moving out some residents to reduce the density in Bu Gao Li. In general, however, it is too difficult to reach an agreement on which people are to be relocated to make room for the rest, so that no actual plans regarding this respect have been officially raised so far. Some preservationists suggested drawing lots to make

the selection or establishing a fund to reward people who are willing to move.<sup>205</sup>

#### 5.4. Conclusion

In the case of Bu Gao Li, the designation earned by its unique architectural features ensures that the buildings are kept, but has not brought truly improvements in terms of the living condition in the neighborhood, or many benefits to the residents. This leads to the questioning of the current heritage site system. Obviously only designating or listing sites are not enough to achieve the purpose of preservation. There seems to be needs of clearer guidance and regulations in terms of the management, funding, maintenance, and relocation issues. On the other hands, the individual renovation efforts by new residents in Bu Gao Li have been more or less discouraged by the difficulties in reality and the large scale of the problems. There is every reason that in the future they should be supported and incorporated into the system to gain more essential effects.

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<sup>205</sup> Xu Hu, Yu Li, "Shanghai Long Tang: Chu Le Huai Jiu Hai Neng Zuo Dao Geng Duo," *Chinese Social Science Today*, Vol. 20, No. 7, (2012).

## CHAPTER 6. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

### 6.0. Introduction

The last chapter compares the four cases introduced above, from three perspectives that have been essentially influential in these projects, and probably in most other Lilong preservation projects. The architectural properties and building condition of the sites to a great extent defines their potential of future uses. The designation system and government policies are designed partly based on the former factors, and oftentimes can lead the projects to different directions. Last, but not least, the existing power imbalance of the society is directly related to the way that the values of the sites were determined, and who can benefit from them.

### 6.1. Architectural Properties and Building Condition

It is necessary to emphasize on the key issues in the former four case studies and to understand why they have led to different results. First of all, the four neighborhoods vary in nature with respect to their architectural and spatial features, despite the fact that they are all Lilong neighborhoods. Tian Zi Fang



is special among the four because of the heavy industrial component within the neighborhood. The media characterizes Tian Zi Fang as an artistic community in Shi Ku Men Lilong and people often times overlook the fact that the creative reuse by artists started out in the factory buildings, not in the actual residential Lilong houses. If not for the artists' early occupation of the deserted factories, in this Lilong there probably would be no expansion of artistic shops in groups large enough to be successful. Also, the preservation of the Lilong houses was finally carried out more or less as a complementing phase of the renewal of the factories in Tian Zi Fang. In other words, what happened to Tian Zi Fang is not a coincidence, but to a great degree directed by the neighborhood's mix-use property.

Bu Gao Li also originally had very small factories and workshops in its neighborhood. But different from Tian Zi Fang, those industrial components were incorporated into Lilong houses, instead of in large factory buildings, which provided large space for artists in Tian Zi Fang. Bu Gao Li, same with Jian Ye Li and Jing An Bie Shu, is dominated by residential function, only with

storefronts and small workshops accommodated in Lilong buildings, which largely limit their potential reuse.

Among the four sites, Jing An Bie Shu has the best condition, mostly thanks to the fact that it is a New Type Lilong with more original modern design, facilities and larger space than the others. Its relatively good condition saved it from the painstaking process of demolition and reconstruction like Jian Ye Li. However, it should be remembered that the government's decision to keep it as it is was made under the condition that most other undesignated sites of Lilong surrounding it were torn down for the area's overall new development.

## 6.2. Designation System and Government Policy

The policies regarding historic properties have played another essential role, which influenced the approaches in the process of Lilong preservation. The Lilongs in the later three cases are all designated at slightly different levels, while Tian Zi Fang is not listed either as an Excellent Historic Architecture or as a Historical and Cultural Site. Bu Gao Li became "untouchable" from the real estate developers' perspective because of its status as a Historical and

Cultural Site within the national heritage preservation system, which is in turn, won by its unique architectural features.

Compared to the national heritage preservation system, the local listing of Excellent Historic Architecture in Shanghai seems to have left the government and developers some space for maneuvering, which made the demolition and reconstruction of Jian Ye Li possible. However many deficiencies the designation system has, it certainly has also helped raise the public's awareness of the value of designated sites. In the case of Jian Ye Li, since the Lilong was listed, its demolition and rebuilding inflicted huge doubts and criticism among members of the public, which partially led to the suspension of the project as well as potential commercial loss. It is almost certain that after the wide debate and some undesirable side effects of Jian Ye Li, the government and real estate developers in Shanghai will take their steps more cautiously before reaching the decision to demolish a designated site in the future.

Nevertheless, from another perspective, it can be true that the condition in the Middle and East Lanes of Jian Ye Li was too poor to keep and reuse the

buildings simultaneously. If this was the case, was it necessary to reconstruct the Lilong to revitalize it? If the answer is yes, then the current regulations of the designated sites become an obstacle on the way to renewal, especially when the physical features alone are not significant enough to be all preserved without any alterations. The questions would become how and to what degree the buildings should be reconstructed or altered. And are the added underground floors today appropriate? The approval from the experts committee seems to give the demolition and reconstruction design of Jian Ye Li some legitimacy, but this mere fact has been overwhelmed by the public's anger about the demolition and rebuilding of a "designated" site.

### 6.3. Power and Value in Preservation

Nonetheless, there are some important similarities existing among the four sites, in terms of the power structure and change in their values behind the physical appearance of the buildings or the superficial policies. The core stakeholder, the residents in these neighborhoods, has the least power throughout the processes. Sadly enough, none of the major renovation projects was initiated by the residents themselves or put forward as a direct

result of their willingness, and therefore no substantial benefits to the residents were produced. There were some spontaneous renovation carried out in these neighborhoods, for instance the earlier renovation conducted in Tian Zi Fang, but only in small scales and limited quality because of lack of budget and resources.

In the major infrastructure improving projects led by the government in Tian Zi Fang, Bu Gao Li and Jing An Bie Shu, the products were more like an initial step instead of an end to the unsatisfactory situation. Moreover, these government-led projects were conducted to a great degree in response to the World Exposition to be held in Shanghai in 2010. Thus they had some deficiencies of “image projects” and were completed within limited time to meet the deadline before World Expo, without enough attentions to details and their actual effects. This once again demonstrates that the motives of government-led projects in these cases were much more complicated by political reasons and the like, instead of merely standing by the residents’ interests, and as a result could not truly meet their demands. Even in Jing An

Bie Shu, the residents' complaints were admitted and taken care of mostly because it suited the government's overall target of the area's development.

As to the former residents in Jian Ye Li, either they were willing to be relocated or not. Their only choice facing the project was to move out with as much compensation as they could get by arguing and fighting with the government-led developer. Whereas in Tian Zi Fang, the residents seemed to be able to decide by themselves whether to rent out their places or not, even though more and more of their decisions to rent out were partially forced by the expansion of commercial activities. The strong commercial development appears to render the staying residents in powerless positions and might form a cycle of ever marginalization of the remaining residents.

Tagged by many as "spontaneous" or "bottom-up" preservation, Tian Zi Fang in effect has been taken under the charge of the district level government once it obtained official recognition. This transition from illegal to legal position was only achieved after it already showed a certain degree of commercial potentials or economic value, and could present a positive image of the district and the city on behalf of the government. Otherwise there would probably be

few possibilities for the lower-level officer to convince the upper-level government to save the Lilong.

It is the same power structure which ruled the projects of other Lilongs and their change in value. The shift of Jian Ye Li from a poor neighborhood to a luxury community is a realization of its transition from the non-organized status to the one-off redevelopment controlled by the government in corporation with real estate investors, through relocating the original lower-class residents. It seems that the market value of Lilong decreases when it is in the hands of the powerless, but increases dramatically once it moves to the hands of the empowered.

However, the transition of control and the change in value also place burdens on the current ownership. The increased economic value can only be maintained as long as it reflects the true social value of the sites. The side effects of Jian Ye Li, the endangering of the original attractiveness of Tian Zi Fang and Jing An Bie Shu, and the inadaptability of today's Bu Gao Li, are all the results of not being in compliance with their true social value, which is imbedded in these sites' deep connections with people.

#### 6.4. Conclusion

Among the three factors discussed above, the designation system and government policy is the most adjustable one. And they should be amended to respect and accord with the individual architectural properties and the building condition as much as possible. Thus the recommendations in the chapter of Conclusion will stress on the first two factors. Through the analysis of power and value imbalance of today's Lilong preservation, it shows who the strong sides are and who the powerless parties are in the processes. In order to benefit a larger public in Lilong preservation, the society as a whole needs to face these existing imbalance and inequality squarely, and a better designed neighborhood preservation policy can reduce their affects.



## CONCLUSION

### 1. Recommendations

It is often believed that up till now there are three models of Lilong preservation and renewal in Shanghai. The first one, the commercial development model, is exemplified by Xin Tian Di. The second model is that of Tian Zi Fang, also known as the mixed-use of creative industry and residential model. And the third model is Bu Gao Li's residential preservation model. Setting up these models helps promote the awareness of preserving Lilong, but it does not guarantee that these are ready-to-use patterns for the future preservation of other Lilong neighborhoods.

As the earlier four case studies demonstrate, each Lilong has its distinct features in terms of architectural value, buildings' composition, spatial arrangement, scale of the neighborhood and residents' characteristics. Therefore each of them is able to trigger and embody different transformation within the neighborhood. Considering this variety within the vast area of Lilong and also the early stage of Lilong preservation Shanghai is in, it is now still inappropriate to limit the possibility of Lilong preservation to the above three

models. In fact, far from enough attention and respect has been given to the individuality of each Lilong.

To better realize each Lilong's potential, the pre-condition is to understand its unique properties, so that a suitable preservation and renewal project could be designed for it. The value of the Lilong is much more than the summary provided in the designation report. The 4 levels of Excellent Historic Architecture of Shanghai or the levels of Historical and Cultural Site could not possibly describe all the important features and qualities of a place. The designation system should be used as a way to secure the bottom line, because the current preservation regulations are put forward as a generalization not steered towards each specific site.

In understanding the properties of a Lilong, architecture scholars or historians may be the best ones to carry out a survey in terms of its physical features and values. While when it comes to the "story-scape", the connections of a place to social lives, it is the residents actually living in the Lilong who understand the place most fundamentally. The Lilong's problem is their problem, and the Lilong's needs to a great degree are also their needs. Here

the residents include long-time residents, new residents, and people who work in Lilong. A successful Lilong preservation project must engage those people in an extensive way.

In the four cases, different extents of engagement of residents existed during the preservation processes, but not all of them produced positive results, and they were mostly involved in a superficial way, or only in a limited time period.

To aim more accurately at the target of Lilong preservation, and to release part of the burden from the upper-level government, residents should be encouraged to organize, invest in, and participate in carrying out the plans for the Lilong they live in. The engagement should start from the very early stage of the planning covering the Lilong on its future orientation, through the implementation of the plan and all the way till after the completion of a project.

Considering the residents' relatively limited financial and social resources, it is extremely necessary that the efforts of the government and the residents are combined, not separated, as seen in the cases described above. The government does not have to, and should not play all the roles (for instance, administrator, developer, contractor, etc.) simultaneously, like it is doing now.

Also, it is helpful to assign different sorts of responsibilities to different levels of government. It appears in the four cases that it is mainly the district level government that initiates and controls those major projects. Unfortunately, the successful bottom-up communication between different governmental levels that happened in the middle stage of Tian Zi Fang's preservation is very uncommon.

It is natural that the government at the neighborhood level has a more realistic understanding of the neighborhoods which it administers directly, thus it should be involved more in the whole process as a mediator. Meanwhile, the upper-level government should restrain itself from extracting income through controlling the properties and lands in the neighborhoods by setting up regulations, and should limit its part to serving as supervisor, providing resources and accesses for the specific projects, as well as constantly incorporating neighborhood preservation into the overall city and district planning.

Besides the government and the original residents, a few other forces are playing an increasingly important role in the preservation of Lilong. One is the

academics, which contributes a great deal to the rising public awareness. To further this influence, more educational events or programs not limited to specific projects can be carried out with the help from the academia towards the general public. Another factor is the growing middle class. They are the core force in moving into, consuming in, and regenerating the Lilong, as demonstrated in the cases of Tian Zi Fang, Jing An Bie Shu, and even Bu Gao Li to a lesser extent. But again, they need guidance, support and a certain degree of education from the government and the academics to adequately exercise their power.

Successful projects at any time and in any place require clearly defined rules to avoid unwanted interruptions and bias. In the process of Lilong preservation, the government should lead the way. This can be in the form of more specific and flexible preservation regulations, or incorporating preservation perspectives in general development regulations, and with details defining each stakeholder's rights and responsibilities, and moreover, limiting the government's power itself. It is especially important to measure the loss and gains between preservation and commercial development, reduce the overall

sacrifice of both the built and social environment, in order to reach a win-win situation. The rules should be designed in a way that a balance between different parties' interests and a solution as close to most suitable, equitable as possible could be achieved after following them.

## 2. Limitations and Further Studies

The design of regulations or laws is beyond the scope of this thesis and of the author, but it is the key in launching Lilong preservation, and further investigations are much needed. Further studies on Lilongs from a larger geographical area are needed, as for example in the former Chinese town and the area now called Yangpu District. Because of restrictions of time and resources, the cases in this research are all located in the French and English Concessions. However, there are or used to be a large number of Lilongs in the other two areas mentioned above. But there seems to be much fewer preservation projects recognized of “model” values in those districts.

Another topic that deserves further investigation is the sanitation in Lilongs. It alone can be a key influence on Lilong preservation. The sanitation here also includes the affects of smell. This thesis only touches on the importance of

the sanitation factor, while a detailed and comprehensive study of it in the context of Lilong can be extremely useful. Finally, the research of this study is mainly done in the U.S., except for a month in Shanghai and the author's earlier five-year-experience in the city. As a result, it is not accompanied by the author's direct interviews of different stakeholders from each case, which could make the thesis more demonstrable. Instead, the author relies upon interviews by other researchers and news reports, which were adopted in order to compensate.

Preservation should not be an end in itself but a means to build up a better environment to live in for everyone. It becomes a distortion of preservation if it only benefits a few people but does harm to many others, even if the physical buildings are saved. This is also why the social connections comprised in a place should be emphasized in its preservation process. Through preserving a place for the less powerful people and enhancing its physical condition on the base of preserving its intangible qualities and embedded social connections, the powerless using the place can be empowered. Equitable

benefits of preservation can only be achieved as the result of a power balance throughout the preservation process.

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